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JOHN WILHELM ROWNTREE.







John Wilhelm Pommer.



# JOHN WILHELM ROWNTREE

## ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES

Edited by

JOSHUA <sup>✓</sup>ROWNTREE  
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LONDON : HEADLEY BROTHERS

14, Bishopsgate Street Without, E.C.

1905

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7617  
R68  
1705

HEADLEY BROTHERS,  
PRINTERS,  
LONDON ; AND ASHFORD, KENT.

685892  
3.10.33

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## PREFATORY NOTE.

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SINCERE thanks are due to J. M. Fry, F. Thompson, A. Smithson, M. Rowntree, L. Richardson, F. Thorp, J. B. Hodgkin, and J. J. Green for the loan of letters ; to the Editors of *The Friend*, *British Friend*, *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, *American Friend*, *Young Friends' Review*, *Friends' Intelligencer*, and *Bootham* for permission to reproduce articles or extracts from their pages ; to H. B. Binns for information as to *Present Day Papers*, and to E. J. Hart for the index.

The two articles entitled "God in Christ" were to have been completed by a third, but this was never written.



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## INTRODUCTORY SKETCH.

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“This is the Comfort of Friends, that though they may be said to Die, yet their Friendship and Society are in the best sense ever present, because immortal.”

WILLIAM PENN.

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## JOHN WILHELM ROWNTREE.

THE name is that of the Rowan, or mountain-ash. Old people in the North Riding of Yorkshire still give it a soft two-syllabic pronunciation.

It is understood that in the first half of the eighteenth century, when the parental home was a farmhouse still to be seen a mile or so north of Hutton Rudby, in Cleveland, one William Rowntree was sent adrift portionless because he had turned Quaker. He afterwards married, took the Riseborough farm, near Pickering, and brought up his family there. His son John migrated to Scarborough, founded a grocery business, and married Elizabeth Lotherington, who added sweetness to his strength. Their third son, Joseph, moved to York, established there a similar business, and married Sarah Stephenson, who combined saintliness with an excellent judgment : he became a leading member of the City Council, of Committees of the Friends' Schools and Retreat, and of many other philanthropic bodies, and was largely instrumental in abolishing the suicidal custom of disownment for “marrying out” in the Society of Friends.

Their second son, Joseph, who married as his second wife E. Antoinette Seeböhm, is the head of the Cocoa firm, and is widely known as the co-author of "The Temperance Problem." The Seeböhm family are said to be descended from an officer in the Swedish army, who went over with Gustavus Adolphus during the Thirty years' war, and afterwards settled in Germany.

John Wilhelm, born on the 4th September, 1868, was the eldest son of this marriage. He grew up in the city of York, in a home in which hospitality and thought for others were portions of his inheritance. It was enlivened as the years went on by a family of four brothers and two sisters. One who knew him well writes:—

"As a child, although very affectionate, he was of a passionate nature, and he had to struggle against this weakness certainly well into his school life. He had a highly nervous temperament. He was always truthful and honourable, but had to fight against selfishness. He was a very close observer, was always imaginative, a great mimic, and fond of acting. He had a German nurse, and spoke German before he could speak English. His deafness interfered with the enjoyment of school life, and probably was then acutely felt. A power of composition was early shown in childish harangues to his companions, and in essays contributed to the School Essay Society. He had the artistic temperament strongly developed, with a great sense of beauty in nature and art. He showed considerable facility in fine pen and ink work, and occasionally did a little oil painting, but made little after use of these gifts, except for diagrams and illustrations for his Adult School lessons."

John was educated at the Friends' School at Bootham, with an intermediate tarriance at Oliver's Mount School at Scarborough. He was not distinguished in his classes, caring more for men than mathematics, and the deafness

already alluded to shut him out from many of the games of the playground. To the onlooker he would have passed as a delicate child, observant and quick, not sympathetic, inclined to be quizzical, and for a schoolboy, careful of his appearance. One of his masters writes of his schooldays, "J.W.R., as I remember him, was undoubtedly a boy of good natural ability, but being far from robust had never learned to use it effectively. He was not of a happy, contented disposition. He had not developed that genial brightness which was so striking on all occasions when I have met him latterly." To this he adds, "No one knows what he has been to some of us."

Another master in describing his final year at Bootham, writes :—

"His difficulty in hearing had already begun to show itself. He always sat by me to be able to hear, and when I had occasion to use the blackboard he followed me there. I always felt that he was a most appreciative pupil, anxious to learn and to miss nothing, and very grateful for any little one could do in helping him to take full advantage of his last year of school life."

On leaving school he went at once into the Cocoa works at York, and though not naturally methodical, he applied himself to business with extraordinary energy and diligence. Beginning in a very subordinate position, he rapidly fitted himself for more responsible posts, and won and retained the esteem and friendship of the employees with whom he was associated. At this time he had not learned to measure his physical strength, and a certain degree of irritability from overstrain was often noticeable. In the later years of his life this irritability was so fully mastered, that few even of his personal friends knew of the struggle before the victory. His impetuosity of mind and disposition became

gradually disciplined, without any loss of executive force or administrative skill.

With a restless and inquisitive mind which familiarised itself with many departments of knowledge, and was determined when possible to test things for itself, it was inevitable that the waves of modern doubt should break heavily upon him. For a few years he experienced great religious unsettlement. Ever afterwards he entered with understanding and great sympathy into the condition of any who were passing through a similar experience. At times he would speak as if such conflicts were the lot of all his hearers, hardly allowing for the unquestioning faith of some, or for the intellectual indolence and spiritual sloth which shield many mortals from the heartfelt searchings he had passed through himself.

The following extracts from two letters written to different friends in 1893 will best describe the early stages of his wrestling after a personal religion :

“ I believe my spiritual growth, taken for what it is worth, springs from the first doubt I ever felt, which was a doubt of the miracle of the raising of Lazarus. Till then I never thought, and I think I woke up simply to find that I had never really believed anything. I gave up one thing after another gradually, without any heart-rending or regret, I am afraid, but with sighs of relief if anything—an unreality seemed removed when I had stripped myself of what in me it was mere cant to hold to, and it was as if I had cleared my mental decks for action. I *could* not have worked under the old beliefs, I believe I should have gone off into mere worldliness if it had not been possible to come under the influence of free thought.”

“ West Malvern, Sept. 18th, 1893.

“ Personally I feel that all talk of creed tests, etc., is very apt to produce hypocrisy and unreality in some young minds. The very idea of supposed essential con-



formity to some set dogma—an unwritten law which certainly is supposed to exist, is extremely mischievous.

“For two or three years I have been on the verge of resignation, and had it not been that I was favourably circumstanced, should no doubt have left Friends.

“How can we demand of the young who are only on the threshold of experience an acceptance of dogmas the meaning of which they cannot fully grasp, and which experience alone can teach them to understand or value.

“To demand this is to create unreality in many at least, if not all, and tends I believe to check real spiritual growth. I feel for myself and for many other young Friends that what we want is to strike a deeper note in our meetings for worship—deeper than the mere crust of words and almost of thoughts, to the living springs of actual spiritual experience.”

Whilst he was still struggling to obtain a secure foundation foothold of faith, religion became to John Wilhelm Rowntree the most real quest of his life. Humanity stood out before him as the highest of created things, and yet as sorely in need of compassion and of uplifting. He recognised the many ways in which sympathy could be shown, and aid be given to man, in body, soul, and spirit. He was keenly interested in art, in politics, in social reform, and in education, but religion to him held the key of all the rest; and as it grew to be a living reality in his own experience, he spared no time or thought or trouble to make it a reality to others. “Religion and life are one, or neither is anything,” became a cherished maxim with him. In his youthful ardour and longing for fearless sincerity, he was no doubt often crude in his utterances, often perturbing to the watchmen of his spiritual Zion versed in the watchwords of a former generation; but from the outset he sought for an underlying unity in the many diversities of thought and language, and those who knew him best

saw that the great utterance of the Master, "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching," became more and more applicable to his case. His eagerness for more spiritual life in himself, and for more of its liberty and power in the meetings of the Society to which he belonged, found vent in 1893 in a pamphlet entitled "A few thoughts upon the position of young Friends in relation to the Society." The summary at the end was as follows :

"(1) There exists among young Friends doubtless much apathy and worldliness, but also much earnest dissent from many commonly accepted dogmas. Our general condition is far below an attainable standard.

"(2) That partly due to some of our ministry, and to misunderstanding, there is a tendency to negativeness in work, and a drift from the Society.

"(3) That we want both old and young to see the possibility, so long as the root idea of the love and desire for God be the same, of working together, however different the intellectual presentment of truth.

"(4) That based on this idea, we want to stir up young Friends and find work for those who will work, removing as far as may be the difficulties and misunderstanding which have hitherto existed."

This pamphlet brought in a vast correspondence to its author. Though ready with his pen, he was not a great letter writer. One of his letters in 1897 begins "Probably I am the worst letter writer in England," but this is hardly an impartial statement. One of his answers to a correspondent gives a fuller revelation of his own thoughts at this time than any outsider could give, and may therefore rightly find a place here. It is in reply to what he described as a "very kind and sympathetic letter," from Fielden Thorp. Some sentences are curtailed for the sake of brevity only.



“ I have been anxious to avoid any misunderstanding between myself and those from whom I may differ in the intellectual acceptance of truth,—more and more I am led to see that it is a question of attitude, and that, to quote William Penn’s beautiful words, ‘ when death removes the mask ’ we ‘ shall recognise each other, though the divers liveries we wore made us strangers on earth.’ (I have not the exact words by me, but you will no doubt correct me mentally as you read).

“ As regards York especially and the Society in general, I cannot help feeling the ‘ concern ’ grow upon me that we younger Friends should feel more and more the responsibilities of the future. We may number many promising ones among us, but we are *far, far* short of what we might be. I have felt painfully the need of deeper spiritual life. Again and again I feel that in myself, and I know in many others, the deep well springs are not tapped. I want that we should strike deeper than we do in meeting. I cannot feel that meeting is, as it should be, the focus of our spiritual struggles—the glowing centre of our life as a church. Often for instance meeting is a blank to me. Often I feel that the Adult School is more to me, and yet it ought not to be so. This I know, too, is the case of many others. Of course I speak to one with a far greater hold on things spiritual than myself, and my view of things may seem to you to be pessimistic. But I know too well how skin-deep worship is with very many of us young Friends. And with a world weary of doctrinal differences—yearning for something deeper—the actual experience of God’s love warm in the heart,—with the masses practically not touched by deep religious feeling, with signs of a great forward movement in the social conditions, and of a ‘ silent revolution in thought,’ as Farrar calls it, going on in the religious world, it seems to me that if only we Friends will rouse ourselves in this time of crisis we have an immense future. The more I read and understand George Fox, the more I feel that so far from our work being done, it is yet to do. That the world wants bringing back to the feet of Christ and to the

simple faith of simple Christianity—of Christlikeness—that there are still mountains of selfishness and indifference to overcome—still masks of form and convention hiding the truth.

“ If there is one thing that I desire it is that we may not dissipate the spiritual energy of our Society in seeking difference, or conducting controversy on matters theological, but that we may join hands of sympathy over intellectual gulfs, and give ourselves to the work of bringing spiritual life and vigour back to our England. What Church more able than we, if only our Meetings for Worship were glowing with warmth, and our silences living silences. We are free from any weight of tradition or ritual, and with our clearer perception of the indwelling nature of the Spirit, ought to strike more easily below class distinction and form to the recognition of the true brotherhood of man—the want of which it seems to me is the cause of much of the materialism of the present day.

“ I hope I am not speaking too freely, but my pen runs on when I speak of these things, and I must say what I feel.

“ I have been wanting to ask whether in this relation a meeting of Young Friends might not be held at the January Quarterly Meeting to consider the need of spiritual revival amongst us. If you saw your way I should be *very* glad if it could find a place in the programme.

“ I am afraid there is much of the ‘ new criticism,’ as it is called, that is not of the right spirit. There is undoubtedly that attitude of mind that rather glories in ‘ shocking people ’ and in ‘ being unorthodox.’ That cannot go along with real spiritual life.

“ Wide as the difference may be between myself and most with whom I come in contact, I still cling to reverence as an essential element in worship and the treatment of things spiritual. The books which have helped me most are Robertson Smith’s ‘ Old Testament Criticism,’ and on another line Caird’s ‘ Evolution of Religion,’ the latter more than any other book I have read for years, and which,

though I do not suppose you would accept it as I do, could not pain the most 'hopelessly orthodox' Friend.

"But I must not encroach upon you any more. Thank you for the opportunity you have given me of speaking freely. Often and often I have to confess to a want of enthusiasm, and it is hard to feel how constantly and grievously one's own private life falls below one's ideals; latterly I have passed through great depression of spirits, but there is no work I long to be fitted for more than that of sharing in the service of the Society.

Yours very truly,

JOHN WILHELM ROWNTREE."

He sought truth wherever it might be found at first hand. The latest and best books on theology became more engrossing to him than any works of fiction. Indeed, it required some coaxing at times to get him to turn his mind into lighter channels by way of rest, always excepting the stories of Sherlock Holmes!

Among the influences especially helpful to his religious life, that of Dr. Richard Thomas may be mentioned. Writing to Anna Thomas after the death of her husband, and referring to him, John said:—"He was to me a dear and intimate friend, and one who at a critical time in my own religious experience gave me, more than any one person I know, the help which I needed."

Of one address given by Dr. Thomas, he afterwards said, "that sermon first enabled me to see Jesus Christ."

In the pamphlet already referred to, the quotation is made from Robertson, "There are many problems insoluble, except in active life." Adult School work, which had long been carried on in York, was an important factor in the growth of John's thought and character.

On leaving School, he accompanied his father for some time to the parent Adult School in Lady Peckett's Yard, but after a few years the determination to launch out into

extension work grew upon him, and, almost single-handed, he established a school in the neighbouring village of Acomb. A number of railway employees had come to live in the village, and the eager young teacher soon gathered a large company of intelligent men around him. Many of them were largely imbued with the questioning spirit of the age, and no commonplace presentations of truth would suffice to hold them. John rose early and sat up late to prepare his Sunday lessons. Piles of note books and MSS. remain to show the pains he took to give his hearers the best within his reach. The most varied fields of knowledge were searched for their spoils, and the reapings were all made to subserve the deepest purposes of life. One short sample of these notes may be of interest :—

“ July 22nd, 1894, Acomb.

“ Read Addison’s ‘ The spacious firmament on high,’ quoted in Paine’s ‘ Age of Reason.’

“ We have been dealing with the development of life from protoplasm, and have seen how in one direction from chlorophyll and protoplasm we may have the development up to the daisy ; in the other direction through varying forms up to man. There is a volume of God’s nature-library we have not opened, and which we will first peep into before proceeding with the social and moral development of man.” [Then follow some stiff but charming geological notes on the formation of rocks].

“ Geological examination of ourselves will reveal the fact that our character is a stratified rock, each day laying a layer.

“ ‘ Little drops of water, little grains of sand,’ etc.

“ Life is made up of hundreds of little microscopic decisions between right and wrong. Importance of little things.”

And so the notes run on, sometimes three or four abrupt words only serving to suggest a train of thought, sometimes widening out into a complete sentence.



The men were welcomed to the teacher's home as warmly as to his Sunday lessons. The love and loyalty of the class and its teacher were mutual.

It happened to the writer nearly three years ago to be welcomed with open arms by the Secretary of an Adult School in Auckland, N.Z. An English mechanic—he had lost his wife and a son in the old country—had made a fresh start with his surviving children on a government allotment in the bush in New Zealand, and had brought up his family in the love of good reading and a true life. He said that two men had unfolded the real meaning of life to him, viz., John Ruskin by his books, and by some personal letters, greatly cherished, and John Wilhelm Rowntree, by his addresses at the Acomb Adult School. The ex-scholar has since written of his former teacher, "He was one who could lead, for he evinced the wisdom we could trust. We have all too few of such teachers. . . . Our good men are frightened at the depths, so keep in shallow water which is not buoyant."

The development of the firm's estates led to more than one visit to the West Indies. He travelled also in Mexico, Egypt, and Syria, in addition to his many journeys to the United States. The diaries which remain of some of these tours are very readable and racy.

On 28th July, 1892, John Wilhelm Rowntree was married to Constance M. Naish, of Bristol. His home life, first at York and then at Scalby, was one of exceeding happiness. It was lavishly shared with friends of all ranks and conditions. Though his wife ever relieved him of household cares, he did not lose sight of home duties in the far vistas that were constantly opening out before him. Only little more than a year ago he confessed one Sunday to feeling tired at the close of a morning meeting for worship at Scarborough, but said he must return home

and come in again at night; as his home was three miles away he was pressed to stay and rest. He replied decisively that he had promised "Violet" to take her out in her perambulator, and must do it. Violet, his youngest child, was then a person of about a year old. She was duly driven forth, and the tired man came back again to the evening meeting.

Allusion has been made to his early deafness. As the years went on a serious contraction of the power of sight, greatly restricting the field of vision, took place. In any dim light he could no longer see the way before him. The stumbling over a child on one occasion pained him much. One of the best physicians was consulted. He could hold out no hope of improvement, or even of the arrestment of the evil, and John went out from the consultation into the street under a doom of coming and irreparable blindness. He stood by some railings for a few moments to collect himself, and "suddenly felt the love of God wrap him about as though a visible presence enfolded him, and a joy filled him such as he had never known before."\* Instead of retreating before this insidious foe and leaving human wrongs to right themselves, as men would readily have excused him for doing, he only sought the more continually to fit himself for efficient service for God and his fellows, during every day which might yet be given him. In many remarkable ways he turned "his necessity" to "glorious gain"; as one:—

"Who, not content that former worth stand fast,  
Looks forward persevering to the last,  
From well to better, daily self surpast."

A paragraph in a letter written shortly afterwards to Lawrence Richardson, one of his most intimate friends,

\* This sentence is taken from the account of J.W.R. in the *American Friend*, by Rufus Jones.



is characteristic in its prompt acceptance of the situation in which he found himself, and in his determination to make the best of it.

“ October 17th, 1894.

“ My complaint is Retinitis pigmentosa, and Nettleship and Hutchinson have given me up. While writing, I may as well inform you that I have at last finally undertaken the pamphlet campaign. W. C. B., Grubb, Agnes Smithson and myself are a sort of committee, and I am to receive the papers and print and distribute them. We think of calling them Present Day Papers, and numbering them, printing in rich old black type on rough paper, ragged edges, with thorough artistic get-up, and arrange for one person in each big Quaker centre to act as distributor. They are to be perfectly straight, and to have the definite aim of waking up the Society to thought.”

The occasional papers here anticipated grew in time into a monthly periodical, which lasted for several years. The volumes (from 1899 to 1902) are full of thoughtful articles and informing reviews.

Though perforce an ambassador in bonds, he was yet no invalid. He had great enjoyment in life, and remained strong physically. His abounding labours put the inertia of most men without any such limitations to shame. He put himself under an American specialist, and for a time, at the cost of severe regimen and treatment, the onward ravages of the complaint were stayed. His endeavours to reconcile his passion for work with due obedience to his medical advisers often caused subdued amusement to his friends. He was ever ready to explain that a time of rest was coming speedily, when one or two things had been put right first.

In 1899, John was ordered to give up town life and daily attendance at business, and betake himself to a country

home. He chose a house at Scalby, near Scarborough, quickly found pleasure in his new surroundings, gave himself eagerly to his garden, and began, as he said, to "intensify cabbages." Happily this application of chemistry reacted favourably on himself, and injured nobody. In reality the change of residence enabled him to give much of the energy hitherto devoted to business to objects nearer to his heart. He turned with redoubled desire to the "intensifying" of the Society of Friends.

Those who knew him will bear witness that John Wilhelm Rowntree's was one of the most catholic of minds. He believed that the religion of Christ brought out and nourished all that was best in man,—that this religion was intended by its Founder to be a lay, everyday religion, with His cross-bearing as its altar of sacrifice; with a ministry open to all who felt its call, a common fellowship of service, and great liberty in the exercise of spiritual gifts. He saw that this vision had been realised to a remarkable extent in the early days of Quakerism, and he believed that the re-awakening of such a spiritual power in the land would far more than repay all the efforts that could be bestowed upon it.

In 1894 he wrote to a friend, "The more I see of different meetings the more I become amazed at the prevailing contentment with existing conditions, the more I am determined that I won't sit still and do nothing, even if as is probable, anything I do will avail nothing."

"I am glad you deprecate anything approaching a 'set.' I dislike such terms as the . . . School and feel that this labelling and ticketing fosters irritation and controversy."

He had taken part in the Yearly Meeting of 1893, expressing himself on the lines of the pamphlet already

referred to. Referring to young persons in doubt as to their position he said :—

“ He believed that such would benefit a great deal from plain, uncontroversial sermons addressed to them upon the practical duties of life. Much that was spoken from the gallery simply passed by them and did not strike home ; and if it was desired to strike home to them they must be spoken to in their own language ; the minister not yielding one iota of the faith which he held, yet speaking to them in the language which they understood. He hoped that by those words he had not pained those in the meeting whose lives had greater spiritual truth than his own. But he desired that such as himself should not be looked upon by these with suspicion, but rather with a belief that those things in them that were of God would stand, and that those that were not of God would not stand.”

On returning home he wrote as follows to a friend :—

“ 30th May, 1893.

“ I only got back late yesterday from Yearly Meeting, where we have had the most wonderful sittings on the state of the Church. We have spoken out plainly at last, and have been heard with wonderful charity and sympathy. There will now be no fear of a rupture I think, or need of aggressiveness, if only the spirit of the sittings is continued—while for those like myself it has been an immense stimulus for work. I don’t see why, if a more earnest spirit is stirred up among our younger members, we should not fill the largest halls in a town ; and I do believe ideal Quakerism is the religion for all who are drifting from orthodox Non-conformity.”

And again under date 9th June :—

“ The opportunities when a church meets in such a representative way are tremendous. We must not waste them. We spent twenty-five minutes debating whether the women should be admitted to the men’s meeting. It

was Quaker caution and love of detail running to seed—the spectacle was not inspiring. . . . Yearly Meeting in short wants to be more real and alive—less preachy and more practical—more representative and more thoughtful. It wants getting out of its ruts and revivifying. People must undertake to think a thing out and present a subject definitely, that there may be practical, pointed debates and less rambling talk. Take the Education meeting for instance—it was exceedingly poor and profitless, yet magnificently attended—the larger meeting-house crowded. . . . On the whole Yearly Meeting has stimulated me. I see more what is wanted, and feel more determined than ever to devote my life to making the Society of Friends, as far as my little power and little scope allow, a real and living force in the world.”

Careful observers will probably regard the Yearly Meeting of 1893 as the time when a new accession of younger life manifestly blended with the older life of the Society, and made the Manchester Conference and Summer Schools possible in the years to follow.

The following extracts from letters will best show the growth of his mind on themes which became more and more a part of his being :

“ York,

February 25th, 1896.

“ . . . My great concern is to have gathered together only the more leisured and educated, and to appeal to them to look upon their leisure and intellectual gifts as given for the service of the Church, to be held in stewardship for God ; to say, that it is no use complaining of the Society of Friends, but that *we* are perhaps the very ones for want of whose whole-hearted service the church lacks strength.”

“ Inverness-shire.

July 21st, 1896.

“ . . . I am personally somewhat optimistic in regard to the future. I don't mean that I think *we* shall



see the golden light break—or that there are no difficulties or years of hard service, but I do mean that the principle which we understand to be involved in the term ‘Quakerism’ is true, and that *when* the soil is softened by a new rain and a warm sun, the seed of Life will grow up into a mighty tree and not be lost. At present our work is that of tillers of the soil. . . . I believe it is of the utmost importance while pressing, as Paul pressed it, the *practical side* of Christianity, to insist no less on the essential spirituality of the Christian life. The transcendental and mystic element in religion has generally failed as an effective force on any considerable scale, not so much I think because of the innate difficulties of the spiritual life, but because it lacked too largely in the tangible things that men would get hold of—was not sufficiently practical—while on the other hand, we see the very definite limitations which are set to *merely* practical work (I am using ‘practical’ in a partial sense of course, for there surely ought to be no antithesis between a practical and a truly spiritual life—the former ought to spring out of the latter).

“I come back again to my old friend Edward Caird’s statement at the close of his ‘Evolution of Religion.’ We need a religion which shall take count of the whole complex nature of man, shall satisfy his reason and his heart, and really meet the needs of the new time. The world waits for this.”

“York,

April 19th, 1897.

“ . . . I feel as if I had just come out of a tunnel—the horrible feeling of being overworked and in hopeless arrears is passing off, and I am enjoying a peace of mind that is quite strange to me. . . .

“I do not believe we shall get very far with an appeal for simpler living and plainer, purer ways of life, unless we can associate these ideas with the Christ, and show them forth as essential to a true perception and grasp of Christianity as a living faith. We want to translate Christ into modern

terms—to make him real, and to present him in such a way that the appeal shall command the intellect and take a practical hold of life. I am at present reading for the first time carefully the second part of Wendt's great work, and the longing grows upon me that I should be able to give worthy expression to the thoughts which lie at the back of his book. He is feeling his way along what I am sure is a right path. If the idea of the Christ could be presented to men, vividly, simply, and in its true proportions—if the atmosphere could be cleared of theological mists—if we could approach this great subject without the prejudices and preconceived notions which mar our conception of it—what a new life it would give us. And if as a Society we could present the Christ-ideal both as it affects the individual and the community—show him as the heart of all that is true in art and literature—as the force which makes for social progress, the development of the highest and best in men and nations, focussing in him all the various efforts and graspings after light, we would I think soon speak so that men would listen. The work wanted now is much the same as that of George Fox—it is to dig deeper than the modern pessimist, and show him the living rock he has never yet struck, which is the ground of our optimism and faith. . . . It is appalling, when we contemplate it, how few have a real knowledge of God as something more than a superintendent engineer of the Universe, or of Christ as something more real than a factor in a theological proposition.”

“ York,

August 31st, 1897.

“ . . . I am just beginning my Quarterly Meeting visits, next Sunday is my first. I have offered the Quarterly Meeting every other Sunday, and am to go to Rawdon, Wakefield, and Sheffield during September. It is a relief to be really at work on what I feel is my main concern—for I have always put Adult School second, though it has asserted itself for the first place until now.”

“ York,

March 23rd, 1899.

“ . . . I am of the view that a spiritual problem may also be a practical one, and on its practical side the Quaker ministry is a very difficult one indeed to tackle.

“ I think by October or November I shall be able to send you a very interesting statement of the actual conditions of the Ministry in America and in this country, so far as figures—aided by brief statements as to spiritual conditions can give the facts. The results of the inquiry I am pursuing so far only enforce what I have often said as to the extremely pressing nature of the whole question of our Ministry. The condition of the meetings so far as it has been revealed in an inquiry, and so far as my personal investigations and visits have shown, is lamentable.”

“ York,

September 19th, 1899.

“ . . . It is a discipline, doing nothing, to which I find it hard to yield.” . . .

“ Apparently we shall have to leave York soon, and as building is so slow, I am looking to take a country house somewhere, and not build for a few years. The change in one's life will be considerable, but I quite hope it may have its real compensations. The one thing I dread is to have my work in the Society of Friends restricted. I know it doesn't mean much in any case, but it is what I care most about.”

In one of the *Present Day Papers*, Quakerism is described by this youngest of its prophets as “ an ideal of life, eminently practical, and which reveals whenever it is properly understood a surprising beauty.” For the resuscitation of this faith, and to extend his own knowledge, he utilised several visits to America by careful and sympathetic inquiry into the various existing conditions of those who bear the name of Friends, and by freely giving



in return his helpful fellowship and words of cheer. One of his addresses in a Hicksite meeting for worship is given in this volume. These labours led to many valued friendships on the other side of the Atlantic. His last letters show his eagerness to extend and cement such friendships, and to give to his fellow religionists in the States all the spare time and strength that his medical adviser there could allow him.

The essays and addresses in this volume show that to their author the enrichment of the spirit of man was the greatest boon that could be conferred upon him. He sought to nourish his own soul in the best pastures, and by the purest springs he could find. His enjoyments grew by sharing, and so the necessity was laid upon him of ministering to others in thoughts divine, no less than in things temporal. His sermons were often thoughts springing from books just read, or passing events which had strongly arrested his attention. He would ponder on the relationship of these to the highest truths, and prepare his mind to speak with clearness upon them. The "blank sheet" frame of mind in worship stood for slothfulness to him, but on the other hand he anxiously sought to be sensitive to all intimations of Divine guidance, and to the actual needs of those present; speaking, or withholding, accordingly. It was striking at times to note how fine his perception was as to the state of a meeting, although he had heard but little of any previous utterances. Under the same desire to make the best of himself, he took great pains to learn how to use and to modulate his voice. His deafness made this a hard task, but he persevered, and succeeded to a surprising extent in mastering his difficulties. His ministry has been thus described by one who often heard it:—\*

\* E. R. Cross; *British Friend*, April, 1905.

“ John Wilhelm Rowntree’s utterances were enriched by his study of the best that has been thought and said in the world, by his knowledge of German art, particularly that of Dürer and Holbein, and of some of the obscurer artists of the Renaissance, by his vivid recollections of his visit to the Holy Land, by his keen eye for form and colour in landscape, and by his intimate acquaintance with religious history. But all this scarcely goes to the root of the matter. He spoke effectively because he felt deeply. It was heart speaking to heart. His influence over young men and women was due in large measure to the fact that his experience, no less than his imagination, enabled him to put himself in their place. He had felt the difficulties, moral as well as intellectual, which prevent many thoughtful minds from accepting the Christian synthesis, and he never attempted to minimise them. His manly sincerity made it impossible for him to use the stock phrases of the religious vocabulary when they had come to have for him a meaning different from that in which they have been understood in the past. So he boldly proclaimed the fact of Christ in words having the same content as when used in everyday life. Of a singularly refined and reticent nature, and with no trace of egotism in his composition, he was yet constrained by the power of the divine love which had made its home with him, to present Christ to his hearers in the light of his own experience.

“ He had found the solution of the problem of suffering in the revelation of a suffering God, and his conscious realisation of the love of Christ in his own heart came to him when he had entered into the fellowship of His sufferings. And so there was something about his ministry both in public worship and personal intercourse, peculiarly comforting to all who mourned, or were in anxiety and distress.”

“ Therefore to him it was given  
Many to save with himself.”

He liked to speak of Christ’s passion, using the word

in its old English sense of suffering. None who were present can ever forget a wondrous tribute to the suffering Saviour given on one occasion after a week of some storm and sadness. He quoted the lines :—

“ For the glory and the passion of this midnight  
I praise Thy name, I give Thee thanks, O Christ !  
Thou hast neither failed me, nor forsaken,  
Through these hard hours with victory overpriced.  
Now that I too of Thy passion have partaken  
For the world’s sake called, elected, sacrificed.”

Another fellow-worshipper has written of him in prayer, “ ’Twas the cry of the child, with the child’s faith, and the child’s love ; and so he led me, hand in hand, and then he spoke for me to God . . . and as the words came a new strength came too, and a joy that seemed to have been either unknown, or forgotten, until he prayed.”\*

One other reminiscence of his ministry, personal and public, may be cited here :—†

“ To him a man could open out his mind and lay bare his difficulties as to no other friend, and he who had gone through the gloomy sea of doubt was able to reach out a saving hand to those who felt themselves alone amid the waters. Around him, too, the most diverse natures could gather and come into touch with each other ; ‘ he was the clearing house to which we all brought our thoughts,’ said one of his friends and fellow-workers to me, as we talked of what his going meant to us . . . to know him was to be his debtor.

“ The last time on which I heard him speak in public was when he came last autumn to give the opening address at a series of religious discussions at Toynbee Hall. It was a new experiment, begun not without anxiety, and no easy task awaited him. But as he unfolded his thought

\* E. T. W. Dennis, in *The Friend*, March 24th, 1905.

† T. E. Harvey, in *Bootham*, May, 1905.

before that audience of critical men, most of them hostile to the very name of Christianity, one felt how his words went home ; a hush fell at times over opponents that would have been eager to scoff at a faith less deep and less sincere, and the honest doubter must have felt within himself the answering witness which the speaker was striving to arouse, as he set forth to us the unique Revelation of God in the personality of Christ. He could not see all his audience, nor hear all the words that were used in argument, but he had a vision of that which our eyes discerned not, and his spirit listened to the silence of God."

Perhaps his most noteworthy characteristic from the time of leaving school to his death, was that of all round growth. He was not born a saint. As he consciously entered the life which is "life indeed," his whole nature seemed to reach up to the light, and to grow towards it. His humanity became wider and more tender, as his spiritual faculties grew in power and depth. This upward wrestling was not without its cost, even to the last. He was often greatly depressed at the seeming ineffectiveness of his work. Now and then he felt as if he had lost all power of helping others. He would then turn resolutely to some other line of service, or plunge into some hard reading. He would not allow slackness to prevail against him. Passing glimpses of the struggle may be seen in extracts from two private letters.

"Scalby,

September, 1903.

". . . I have singularly little brain power and suffer from acute mental depression, but otherwise, thanks, I am gaining ground steadily. . . . I have given the small relics of energy which I could gather to a paper on the ministry on the lines I spoke of to you."



“2nd October, 1903.

“Every day, at noon till six a depression settles down on me that is hard to shake off.

“The Summer School has been a great success, the best yet I think, taken as a whole. As I expected, however, the permanent settlement is going to begin very small. But we must worry on with it.”

Such letters recall the thought, “It is ever the deepest sigh that leads to the highest note.”

The South African war whilst it lasted was a perpetual pain to him. Two brief extracts from letters at that time indicate his thoughts upon it.

“January 15th, 1900.

“The whole affair is so sickening that it is working upon me like a nightmare. At times I almost wish I were not an Englishman.”

“January 31st, 1900.

“The Society of Friends has been lamentably weak upon this wretched war. I have been appalled at the falling away among our younger people especially. I feel that one lesson of the war for us as a church is the need for the proper instruction of our *own* people. Each generation has to recapture for itself its spiritual heritage, and we need to seize upon the opportunity this war gives us for the re-statement of our principles in terms which will appeal to a new generation. It is quite a mistake to assume that our young people will grow up ‘right upon the war question,’ unless we take the proper steps to inculcate our principles.”

The “Plea for a Peaceable Spirit,” issued by the Yearly Meeting of 1901, was largely the result of his efforts and drafting.

In person, John Wilhelm Rowntree was tall and erect, his figure gained in breadth and strength during

his country life. He had a frank and manly bearing ; and in later years especially, there was always the readiness for a smile behind his straightforward earnestness of purpose. Both in appearance, and often in the opening words of an address, there were reminders of his Teuton ancestry. Any one watching him felt that the gates that barred his vision only shut out the foreground, not the distance. The depicting of him as "with blind eyes luminous" is not inapt. If his sense of humour softened, it grew richer with his ripening years. His merry stories were well-nigh endless. He was the best of companions. Dr. Silvanus Thompson, in a vivid reminiscence of a moorland walk,\* has described him as "teeming with suggestions and ideas. To pass half an hour with him was to catch a glimpse of a soul possessed by an intense and penetrating zeal, held in admirable balance by a ripe and discriminating judgment." Arthur Rowntree has well expressed the thoughts of many in the sentence, "Life for us possesses true wealth because we have shared his friendship, and been moved by his spirituality." On the news of his death reaching one of our public schools, a child wrote home, "I could not help crying when Bill told me, because I liked him so much."

The endeavour has been made in this volume to bring together and perpetuate the essays and addresses (whether previously published, or not) which it is believed John Wilhelm Rowntree set most store by, as representing his deepest desires and highest aims. As they are prefaced by introductory notes explanatory of the times and circumstances at which they were written or spoken it is not needful to refer to them at length here.

Some of his latest activities cannot, however, be so presented. The "Guest House" at Scalby is one of these.

\* *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, April, 1905.

John used to say that the danger of a comfortable country home was the lessening of opportunity for serving others. One of the objects of the Guest House was to safeguard his children from such a snare. The Executive Committee of the Yorkshire Adult Schools had already tried the experiment of establishing a holiday home for their members, but the results had not justified its continuance. John's offer of "Friedensthal," ("The valley of peace")—a detached house with spacious grounds at Scalby, on generous terms, induced the hope that a second attempt might prove more permanent, and after conference between the Lessor and Lessees, the undertaking was launched on a wider basis than before. As the scheme matured John was building a home for himself on land adjoining the Guest House. He needed and deserved a quiet home more than most men, but he planned it for others as much as for himself. The hall was to be large enough for lectures, and on the second floor was a long and pleasant dormitory with fifteen cubicles, to take in an overflow of guests from "Friedensthal" on occasions of pressure. The erection of a pavilion was also contemplated, for the accommodation of week-end conferences, or local Summer Schools. Without forecasting what the future may bring, it may safely be said, that the first summer season of the Guest House has proved very satisfactory to upwards of three hundred residents, and to the committee in charge. In this, as in all his other undertakings, John Wilhelm spared no pains to make the needful arrangements as complete as possible. He was always ready to err on the side of over elaboration, rather than of insufficiency. The great amount of downright hard work which he put into the different Summer Schools and the movement generally, the establishment of Woodbrooke, and other objects that lay near



to his heart, cannot be realised by anyone who has not looked on the piles of memoranda, note books, and correspondence, which evidence his unflagging industry and zeal. The summer settlement for Biblical and Social study, held at Scarborough in 1891, for five weeks, will remain in the memory of those who attended it as a monument to the unassuming generalship, mastery of details, and unflagging spirit of the Secretary. Departmental workers might tire and grow limp, but the bearer of the heaviest load never wearied as a comrade, and never ceased to invigorate his comrades as their leader.

If unforeseen difficulties arose, he sought at once for the underlying cause. The longest railway journey was no bar to a personal interview, and his personal requests were hard indeed to withstand.

“ All hearts grew warmer in the presence  
Of one who, seeking not his own,  
Gave freely for the love of giving,  
Nor reaped for self the harvest sown.”

It is too soon yet to pronounce definitely on all the gains of the Summer School movement to the Society of Friends. There will, however, be general concurrence in the thought which finds frequent expression in the after pages of this volume, that because a lay Church does not train a separate ministry, it is all the more incumbent upon it “ to secure a generally high level of spiritual intelligence, which will in itself provide the soil from which the ministry shall spring.” Summer Schools, like all other occasions, have limitations. They may not answer the needs of all, or meet all the needs of those who go to them; but they have opened out to very many souls new possibilities of Christian fellowship and communion, have helped very many into higher harmonies of mind

and spirit, and have illustrated the sayings of the Earl of Shaftesbury, that "Christianity is essentially practical," and that "practical Christianity is the greatest curer of corrupt speculative Christianity."

On Woodbrooke, the new Friends' settlement made possible by the generosity of George Cadbury, John Wilhelm Rowntree bestowed his time, thought, and affection without measure. He saw in it a centre for the diffusion of religious knowledge, a training place for social service, a home of study with university men for those who could otherwise hope for no such advantage, and a power house for the spread of spiritual fellowship. "Intellectual development," he said, "ought to lead, not to fastidious aloofness, but to the most earnest and powerful advocacy of all that makes for the highest life." The holiday gathering of teachers of children's schools held there only last Easter, was due to his planning and help in various ways. How much that holiday meant to many who so gathered together, it would be difficult to put into words.

The winter of 1904-5 was one of abounding effort and far-reaching thought. The sudden death of his brother-in-law, Ernest Grace, of Bristol, which came very closely home to him, sent him on his way with even renewed faith and diligence. The winter before, John Wilhelm had laid down the lines of a history of Quakerism,—a modern Apologia for its place in Christendom. He estimated that it would prove a ten years' task. "I shall hope," he wrote, "so to proportion my work day by day,—as to keep this study going, and at the same time remain sufficiently in touch with contemporary affairs, although undoubtedly this undertaking involves a certain withdrawal from work which would otherwise have been undertaken. I feel clear that if it can be accomplished, having regard to the far distant future, it is the work that needs doing,

and may have a direct and practical effect upon the policy of the Society. Naturally, I feel my own limitations acutely, but the sense of the need has rested on my mind for some years, and I feel that it is right to make the attempt."

Upwards of two thousand volumes and pamphlets collected together for this work prove the hold it had taken upon him. In addition he had prepared the materials for six lectures (see p. 295) on the Christian's faith as verified in his own experience, and these he had hoped to give in various centres. The building of his own home, and the starting of the Guest House, have been referred to. He was hoping to take part in a general Summer School at Sidcot, and to undertake the secretarial work, and to prepare some historical lectures for a local School at Scalby, planned by his Monthly Meeting at his own request for the ensuing summer. Largely at his instance, it had been arranged to hold a week-end Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting at Scarborough in the spring, with two sittings devoted to a Conference on the subject of the Ministry; and further, he was throwing himself with keen interest into plans for making the holding of the Yearly Meeting at Leeds the occasion for a forward movement in the Society of Friends throughout the north of England, as he firmly held it ought to be.

"It may well be" (he wrote in a circular letter) "that if we take advantage of the opportunities which the Yearly Meeting affords, in the right spirit, and with faith and courage, lasting results will accrue.

"It is, however, the desire of Friends that not only should the Quaker view of Christianity obtain a wider hearing, but that Friends should be drawn out into more public service, and accustom themselves to a wider and more hopeful view of their responsibilities."

The holding of the Yearly Meeting in the provinces, after some two and a quarter centuries of London Yearly Meetings only, was in itself largely due to his advocacy, and to his strong desire that this annual gathering should tell more upon the life of the world around it. Early in the present year, in the midst of all these hopes and efforts, John's sight was again a cause of anxiety, and a visit to his American specialist loomed suddenly before him. The treatment on the last occasion had been painful, but he never hesitated. For himself, he said he would prefer to stay at his work and take the risks ; but his powers were a trust for others, and so the best advice obtainable must decide. He chose to go at once, in order that he might be back before the Yearly Meeting. Shortly before sailing, he presided at the annual meeting of shareholders of the firm in which he was a director, making a masterly speech on the aims and policy of the business, and the importance of the social work carried on among the employees. His last Sunday in England was spent at York. He gave an address in connection with the laying of the foundation stone of a new Adult School at Burton Lane. A grand sunrise had suggested a passage in 1 Thessalonians v, and he dwelt on the light as revealing love to man in the love of God. This was followed by a sermon in the meeting-house on the victory of faith, leading from simple beginnings to " life on the heights," whilst in touch with humanity in the valley. This true sunlight on the soul was for life's morning, not only for its noontide or its evening. He closed very impressively by quoting as a morning hymn,

" Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes,  
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies ;  
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee,  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me."

His wife accompanied him to America, intending to



return in time for the opening of the Guest House. On the voyage John was seized with a severe attack of pneumonia. Rufus Jones happily met the vessel on its arrival, and the unconscious invalid was conveyed to the New York Hospital, where he received every possible attention. There was no recovery, only a quieting down of the fever. He died on the 9th of March. Some references to his last illness, by Rufus Jones, will be found in an article in the *American Friend*, reproduced at the end of this volume.

William Penn said, "Death is but crossing the world as Friends do the seas; they live in one another still." It was part of the longing of this son of the ancient city of York, who breathed his last in the New York of the great Republic, to bridge the seas, and to unite those of Quaker faith and ancestry again into one living fellowship. Since the separations took place in the United States there has probably been no joint gathering of those bearing the name of Friends, so large and so truly united, as that which took place on the occasion of John Wilhelm Rowntree's funeral, in the quiet grounds of Haverford Meeting-house.

The sentence just quoted speaks of Friends as living on "in one another still." The unifying influence of the Divine love which lived in him was strikingly manifested in the parish church of his own village of Scalby, on the Sunday following the tidings of his death; as also in a great memorial gathering in the Salem Chapel at York; it has made itself felt in newness of life in many assemblies of Friends far and near, and in Adult Schools, small and great, which had listened to his teaching. It has added to the unseen power of the gatherings he had helped to plan, it has wakened many a sleeper, and armed many a hesitating worker with new faith and courage. But one must check oneself here; John could not do

with funeral wreaths or tributes of mourning, and he ever showed the finest reserve as to the place of the individual in the service of Truth. To him, death was but the call to a higher and fuller life, and this is the aspect of it which his memory should ever cherish.

Two questions occur almost intuitively to the reader of the briefest sketch of this brave and winsome character. The first, What was the secret influence which enabled him to grow up into the place he came to occupy amongst his fellows? And the second, Were the purposes to which he gave himself worthy of the devotion of such a life? *The* answer to both these questions is to be found in the subsequent pages of this book. A few sentences only by way of indicators need be added here.

It may be said of him in the words he wrote of his brother-in-law, Ernest Grace. "It was out of materials, within ordinary reach, that the victory of his life was won," and yet to the first question no merely human terms suffice for a complete answer. The strong individuality of his faith, and the freedom with which he stated it, at times disturbed those whose spiritual attainments he regarded as far in advance of his own; but no one who knew him questioned the reality of his communion with God. In one of his last letters not intended for publication, the confession, "having come myself to a real and living experience of the saving knowledge of God in Christ," is given as the reason for his whole-hearted desire to help others who might still be facing the difficulties he had passed through himself.

A further insight into his religious experience is given in a letter written a few months previously, referring to a volume lent to him by a friend.

". . . My real difficulty with the book is, that it seems to me to fail just at the point where failure is

most disastrous, and it is not enough for me to regard Jesus as the most perfect of men.

"I do feel that the orthodox have been too timorous and reticent in dwelling upon the humanity of Christ. But whatever be the theological interpretation of the word 'divinity,' Jesus is for me the meeting-point of the human and divine—of man and God. His value to me is not merely that He tells of the divine in men, but that in Himself He reveals to us, through the Scriptures, the human side of the character of God.

"We make a huge assumption if we say that God cannot directly reveal Himself to man on His manward side; and that He did so in Jesus is what I mean by 'divinity.' As a supreme effort towards God, Jesus would indeed be great, but the dynamic of Jesus lies surely in His being an effort of God towards man.

"Mr. A——'s book leaves the great gulf that yawned at the feet of Plato unbridged. His view, beautiful though it be, does not, from my standpoint, meet the deepest needs of a sinful world."

To this may be added the remark made on one occasion to a friend, "To me the cross of Christ contains the revelation that *sin hurts God*."\*

On page 402, the "story from real life" is given with the glow of the narrator's gratitude as he looked back upon it near the close. "The consciousness," he said, "of union with God in thought and action, of an eternal purpose and worth in human life, and of an all embracing love . . . if experience be a guide, is strongest and deepest where the thought of God has been focussed in the personality of Jesus Christ."

In answering the second question—to most onlookers the old difficulty presents itself of not seeing the wood for the trees. John Wilhelm Rowntree sought a truer

\* E. Grubb in *The British Friend*, April, 1905.



perspective of the religious life. "Amidst the decay of creeds," he wrote, "and what some deem the inroads of science upon faith, we see men abandon the responsibility of private thought, and seek shelter in the authority of a Church which claims to be infallible, or of an order of men who claim to be the sole channels of Divine Grace. It is no small honour (would that some of us were more worthy of it) to bear witness to the reality of the immediate communion of the soul with God as the ultimate basis of faith and spiritual knowledge. This spiritual conception of Christianity . . . has created a type of character which England sorely needs—it deepens the sense of personal responsibility, it gives a clearer vision upon moral questions." And again, "The love of luxury, and the loud voiced gospel of Force, these hold the field. The call is for those who have known and seen a living Lord." "We stand not," he said, "by the Society as it is, but by what it may be when its spiritual powers have deepened, and its social conscience has quickened into life."

In Quakerism he saw, not the survival of some hundreds of small companies of lay men and women, worshipping without any separated order of clergy, but a renewal of the freedom of the early church before its decadent restrictions "made the bishop and slew the prophet," to use the graphic phrase of Dr. Rendel Harris. Denominational rivalry had no attractions for him, but he had a general's eye for the campaign of Christendom, and he saw that if the power of Christ's teaching was to prevail in the lives of men, there must be a widespread return to a free ministry, and to the spiritual fellowship which won the victory against a pagan world, and the forces of the Roman Empire. It has been said that the Friends have already continued their campaign against the heresy of a dual standard of life longer than the early church did. But this latest

young leader in the struggle believed that the signs of the times, as well as the scholarship of the age, were again converging in this direction, and that the possessors of a faith "acknowledged on every hand to have been beneficent in its results, are bound by every consideration of duty and of patriotism to endeavour to extend it." For this, then, he laboured and planned unceasingly. It is surely a great vision, full of import, both to the churches of Christ, and to the world at large. In proportion as it is cherished and worked for, will humanity rise up into that kingdom which is "righteousness, peace, and joy" in the spirit of the living God.



## TESTIMONY

OF PICKERING AND HULL MONTHLY MEETING, RESPECTING  
JOHN WILHELM ROWNTREE, A MINISTER, DECEASED.

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We deem it right to bear witness to the power of Divine grace in a life just taken from us.

John Wilhelm Rowntree was born at York on the 4th of Ninth Month, 1868, and died in the New York Hospital on the 9th of Third Month, 1905. His school life was passed at the Friends' Schools at York and Scarborough. He entered with keenness and success into business life. He had much enjoyment in art and literature. His capacity for detail in no way impaired his power and breadth of thought. A limitation of hearing hardly affected his manhood's vigour, and the thought, "How good is man's life, the mere living," was given to him abundantly. His marriage with Constance M. Naish brought him a home life of exceeding happiness. With these gifts he had great strivings after reality, and his search for truth led him at the outset through depths of doubt and difficulty. When the light of Christ came home to his understanding, and grew there with increasing clearness, he yielded himself with a whole-hearted obedience to the heavenly vision. The love of Christ became the law of his life.

This vision followed immediately upon the knowledge that a partial loss of sight which he was already suffering would probably develop into blindness, with other ills in its train. Instead of retreating before infirmity, he made the prayer his own unceasingly :

"So much the rather thou celestial light  
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers  
Irradiate."

And this prayer was answered. Once touched, as it were, with the live coal from the Altar, his lips were opened, and the cry came from a full heart : " Here am I, send me."

In 1898 he was recorded as a Minister. In 1899 the doctors ordered him to desist from daily business, and to betake himself to a country life. This brought him as a resident to Scalby, near Scarborough. The change only transferred his energies into a new channel.

His great longing was to be permitted to extend the Kingdom of Heaven amongst men. He felt he could best do this by helping to strengthen, to enlarge and vivify, the lay religious Society to which he belonged. He saw a great door and effectual open before it if only its members recognised their full responsibilities, and brought to the Lord's service minds and hearts prepared and consecrated.

His conception of the Christian Ministry was very wide. He coveted earnestly the best gifts, but fully recognised the width of meaning in the Master's expression : " I am among you as he that serveth." He felt keenly the need in Christendom of a large-hearted, courageous following of the way in which Christ and the Apostles transformed the everyday life of man into effectual service for God and for humanity, avoiding set channels and special forms of speech. He gave ungrudgingly of all his possessions, first and foremost of a richly stored mind and a humble childlike spirit. Sometimes the one was more observable, sometimes the other, but the Meetings that knew him best knew that, as his experience deepened, they were *never* dissociated. It was given him to touch life at all sides with chivalrous tenderness and to call out the best in men of very different classes and experiences. To doubting and perplexed minds, to young and old, his message came with power, because it was felt that first he wrought and then he taught,—that he had known that of which he spoke.

In the work of the Church he sought to be of a universal spirit, to enter into fellowship with all seekers for the kingdom, and with those whom he longed to see setting out on the quest. He held with George Fox that " everyone hath



an office, and is serviceable," and that in truth we all have need one of another.

Viewing the spread of the Kingdom of Christ as the noblest purpose of life, he was eager to have the best equipment provided for all its workers, whether for social, educational, or more distinctively Gospel service. For this end he devoted much time and strength to the building up of Woodbrooke, and to the holding of Summer Schools. His mind was not one that could be satisfied with repetitions, or with the most approved formularies as such. He had found them insufficient in his hour of need. "Let us," he said, "in our message offer that which is beyond all creeds—the evidence in our lives of communion with the Spirit of God."

So he spoke, so he lived amongst us, and the life spoke yet more convincingly than the words.

On his way across the Atlantic to undergo severe medical treatment, because he felt that he held his life in trust for others, pneumonia seized him. Three days after landing at New York the call to higher service came, and all that is mortal of him was laid to rest by the kindest of friends in the Burial Ground at Haverford, not far from Penn's City of Brotherly Love.

We feel weak to hand on the legacies of his life. Yet, in the words of William Penn : "This is the comfort of Friends, that, though they may be said to die, yet their friendship and society are, in the best sense, ever present, because immortal."

For his glad life lent to us we give praise and thanks to Him whose power he manifested : whose voice he heard, and followed. His words still sound in our hearts :—  
 "Thou, O Christ, convince us by Thy Spirit, thrill us with Thy Divine passion, drown our selfishness in Thy invading love, lay on us the burden of the world's suffering, drive us forth with the apostolic fervour of the early Church ! So only can our message be delivered : 'Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward.'"





## THE RISE OF QUAKERISM IN YORKSHIRE.

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### *INTRODUCTORY NOTE.*

The three following Lectures were given at a Summer School held in the Tolbooth, Kirby Moorside, under the direction of Pickering and Hull Monthly Meeting, from the 22nd to the 28th of September, 1904.

The School was intended mainly for members of the local congregations of Friends, especially for any who had not been able to attend greater gatherings elsewhere. The idea of localising Summer Schools in comparatively small districts, was taken from the Friends at Mount Kisco, in the State of New York. They had held a two days' session in May of the same year, in a retired Meeting House in the woods, to listen to lectures by Rufus Jones and others, which two Scarborough Friends had the privilege of attending.

The Kirby Moorside School proved to be a very enjoyable fellowship, leaving happy memories behind it. John Wilhelm Rowntree then and there resolved to work for a similar gathering at Scalby in 1905. He proposed following up the three addresses here given, by a lecture on George Fox, from the national as well as from the local standpoint, and by one or more lectures on the history of Quakerism at Scarborough. These were never written.

The three Kirby Moorside lectures were written, as they themselves continually suggest, for comparatively small audiences in close fellowship one with another. In their preparation, however, the lecturer had always in view the history he was contemplating on a much larger scale. From these addresses some idea may be formed of the enthusiasm and skill which would have been brought to bear on the larger work, if his life had been spared to complete it.



## THE RISE OF QUAKERISM IN YORKSHIRE.

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### LECTURE I.

BY way of preface to these lectures, let me apologise for delivering them.

In the first place, it is impossible to dismiss the past and present of Yorkshire Quakerism in three hours. There are more questions to ask than we can possibly answer ; there is more material than we can possibly digest. We can only nibble round the edges of our cake and pull out a plum here and there, like Jack Horner. We must, indeed, dismiss all hope of playing the “ compleat angler,” whether for Quaker plums or for Quaker trout, and confine ourselves to one or two broad considerations, bringing in such details as shall illustrate and enforce the lesson to be drawn.

Moreover, we must be local. We are met at Kirby Moorside. In Pickering, Malton, Scarborough and the surrounding wolds and moors, we find our natural hunting-ground. This is the more suitable because other localities have already had their historians. To name no others, Isabel Hall has written racily of Thirsk in the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner* of 1903. Fielden Thorp has discoursed of York in the same periodical in 1892, Joseph Sewell and William Linney have written of the East Coast and Hull, and John Stephenson Rowntree has published in pamphlet form

a History of the Quarterly Meeting. Where the grass is already cropped we must forbear to graze.

Local considerations, then, and a special purpose, make up my apology. Exactly what the "special purpose" may be, will appear at the end. Three lectures, like the old three volume novel, must proceed decently and in set stages towards a conclusion, which it would be a literary crime to betray in the preface.

And now let me bring the beginnings of 17th century Quaker history to your recollection. In 1624, when Jacob Böhme, the mystic of Germany, lay on his death-bed, when John Milton, a lad of sixteen, was at college in Cambridge, and George Herbert of "holy behaviour," was emerging from "very private living" in Kent;—George Fox was born in the Leicestershire village of Drayton in the Clay. The elusive inwardness of the mystic, the fervid piety of the cultured cleric, the prophetic grandeur of the poet, the Ishmaelite, the ecclesiast, the Puritan, these are types of an age torrential in its spiritual energy, and yet with its quiet reaches of culture, its backwaters of mystic calm. It was the age in which Fox lived, nay! in which he moved, mighty, magnetic, a storm centre travelling from over great spiritual deeps to enrich parched lands with heavenly rain. The contemporary of Baxter and Bunyan, of Pascal, Molinos and Guyon, of Locke, Hobbes and Dryden, the witness of the civil war, of the rise and fall of the Protectorate, of the obscene debaucheries of the Restoration, of the dangerous pedantries of James II., and of the return of stable government under William and Mary, Fox was the



great 17th century antagonist of sacerdotal pretension. William Laud was executed in 1645, but the Independents, Presbyterians and Baptists, though they denied that Laud or his clergy were the divinely appointed channels of grace, laid stress on the letter of Scripture and the ordinances, and in their dispute about baptismal rites ceremonialism reached its climax.

Thus, belief in the efficacy of forms remained when the ritual of Laud had been hurried out of sight, and when his head fell from the block, ecclesiastical authority did not fall with it. Bibliolatry supplemented rather than replaced the authority of the ministers of the Word, and the Rabbi, armed *cap à pie* with texts of proof, held the pulpit against all comers. Although Fox did not so much raise a spiritual revolt as deepen and direct tendencies already in being, his was the most powerful voice crying for spiritual reality in the land of shadows.

We must remember how the battle was arrayed, if we are to understand the man, his message and his success. A knowledge of the issues explains the spiritual strife waged in hollow trees and desert places, which ceased only in the conviction that there was one, even Jesus Christ, who could speak to his condition. This was in 1647. Had this Leicestershire shepherd never wandered in despair to find at last the divine knowledge, as he says, "experimentally," we had never been here, never learned to call each other friends. 1647, then is a year of grace, the year from which we may fairly date our Summer School movement! Before that, however, the spirit was stirring. In 1644 there was quickening in Leicestershire, in 1645 in Warwickshire,

in 1646 in Nottinghamshire ; while the year 1647 marks the recognised beginning of Fox's ministry, which was in Derbyshire.

In 1649, Fox is imprisoned for the first time at Nottingham ; in 1650 at Derby, where Justice Bennett gave Fox and his followers the nickname of Quaker,—a nickname that was to stick. The Quaker movement was now gathering force and assuming its true character. Wars, oaths, the death penalty, are testified against in 1651, the time of Fox's first visit to Yorkshire. In the years 1651-1654, many of the great Quaker preachers (as you will see from the list in your possession\*) were convinced, not forgetting Margaret Fell at Swarthmore Hall, with several of her household, in 1652. In 1654, Swarthmore Hall was the centre of an extensive organisation of ministers, who, to the number of sixty, preached through the length and breadth of England. This period marks the beginning of rapid extension, the settlement of meetings for worship and discipline, and the outbreak of severe persecution. In 1653 persecution in the North is general, and the first public flogging, that of Mary Fisher and Elizabeth Williams, takes place in Cambridge. In 1656, one thousand Friends are imprisoned in Great Britain, and in 1658, the year of Cromwell's death and of the first general Quaker meetings, occurs the martyrdom of Mary Dyer, Marmaduke Stevenson and two others at Boston in America.

In 1655, James Nayler fell into spiritual pride and blasphemy, probably through mental overstrain, and suffered cruel punishment at the instance of Parliament.

\* See list of "Founders of Quakerism in Yorkshire," Appendix I.

He has been unjustly handled by those who have seen only the odd and the fanatic in Quaker history, and an altogether exaggerated importance has attached to his temporary backsliding.

Nevertheless the event had its marked influence upon Fox. Three years earlier, James Milner and Richard Myer had "gone out into imaginations," and George Fox realised that the doctrine of the Inner Light was not without its perils. Was the individual to be set above the Church? In the reaction against ecclesiastical authority and Bible worship,—was it possible to go too far? There were strange spirits abroad. A perusal of Edwards' "Gangroena," published in 1643, which details 252 heresies, each with their particular adherents, reveals a mental ferment that might appal more charitable men than this Presbyterian compiler, with his horror of religious toleration.

In 1661, John Perrot and Charles Baily, to quote Fox, "turned aside from the Friends and Truth." They followed the spirit of the hat, which they refused to remove in prayer. Perrot, visiting the Pope, was confined in an asylum. Perhaps the Pope judged truly, but there were many to hail Perrot as a martyr on his return. The same temper was to be illustrated in another and more serious form. In 1673, the settlement of Women's Meetings for discipline met with bitter opposition, and in 1675 a separation under Wilkinson and Story took place. The publication of Robert Barclay's "Anarchy of the Ranters" in 1676, of William Rogers' "Christian Quaker" (Wm. Rogers was a leading separatist) in 1680, of Thomas Ellwood's

“Antidote to William Rogers” in 1682, of William Rogers’ “Scourge,” which appeared in 1683, and Ellwood’s “Rogero Mastix” in 1685,—tell of a continued strife, which, although the dust-cloud of personalities obscured its proper significance, was indeed concerned with questions of fundamental importance.

Speaking broadly, we may say that from the time of James Nayler’s fall, the Whitefield in Fox is gradually subordinated to the Wesley, and that such outbreaks deepened his sense of the need, under the human conditions of spiritual fellowship, for order and discipline in the church. The individual is to be subject, not supreme, and a compromise is effected between the mystic, ecclesiast and prophet.

The closing years of Fox’s life—he died in 1691—were much occupied with those practical measures which have given the Society of Friends a church machinery running, on the whole, with remarkable smoothness after 250 years. If the early evangelism, with its swift popular response, is a testimony to the inwardness of Fox’s message and to the reality of his experience, his wise organisation is an illustration of that sanctified commonsense, without which the fervours of apostolic zeal are apt to be dissipated in transient and ineffectual campaigns.

It is not my purpose, however, to discuss Fox in particular, or Quaker History in general. The Chronology placed in your hands\* will sufficiently remind you of the general sequence of events. The cruel persecution, an experience of forty years (4,200 Friends were in jail in 1662),—the severities under the Conventicle

\* See “Chronological Memoranda,” Appendix II.



Acts, met by a passive resistance never exceeded in its quiet courage and sustained endurance,—a resistance which secured liberty of worship for every Englishman ;—the rapid spread of Quaker evangelism, which shrank not from approaching the Pope at Rome, or the Sultan of Turkey, which sent its emissaries to Malta in the South, Hungary in the East, Barbadoes, Nevis, St. Kitts, Jamaica and the American colonies in the West ; which, in William Penn, founded Philadelphia, and in Mary Dyer, martyred upon Boston Common, opened the battle for religious liberty in the New World,—an evangelism universal in its spirit, unlimited in its ambition, and world-wide in its scope.

Nor must we linger over the picturesque incidents of Quaker history ; George Fox at Nottingham crying out in the Steeple-house to the preacher who would try all doctrines by the Scriptures, “ Oh, no, it is not the Scriptures, but it is the Holy Spirit,” or at Ulverstone, where Margaret Fell stands up in her pew, so astonished is she at his piercing words, or in the open air preaching to thousands on a hill near Langlands in Cumberland, from a rock near Firbank Chapel and at Synderhill Green in Yorkshire ;—to ten thousand in an orchard at Bristol, or sitting for hours in silence on a haystack to “ famish the people from words.” Nor must we dwell on the pathos of the sufferings ; Fox laid six months in the terrible Doomsdale at Launceston, too foul a den for public description ; the young James Parnell, the first Quaker martyr, dying of exposure in Colchester Jail ; Meeting-houses closed by soldiers, the meetings held in the streets,



the preacher seized, another taking his place, the women testifying in their husbands' stead, and, when all the adults are haled to prison, the Quaker children with a zeal beyond their years, holding the meeting by themselves. Or the Old Bailey trial of 1670, famous in constitutional history, when Penn, only twenty-six years of age, and William Mead, his sturdy companion, support the jury in their great struggle against the oppression of the bench. "I say you shall bring in another verdict, or you shall starve and I will have you carted about the city," shouts the Recorder. "You are Englishmen," says Penn, "mind your privileges, give not away your rights," and the jury answer, "We never will !"

Nor yet must we be tempted by the literary interest of Penington and Ellwood's friendship with Milton, of Robert Barclay, of Ury, writing his stately "Apology"; of Stephen Crisp, the weaver of Colchester, fervent apostle, wise counsellor, statesman in the Quaker fellowship, inditing his epistles of exhortation to a pupil of Descartes; the Princess Elizabeth of the Palatine, a woman cultured, learned in the lore of philosophers, and strongly attracted by the Quaker's inward faith. No! these are well-travelled roads. We must turn to our bleak northern moors, wrapped in their lurking mists, and seek in our market towns, our farmsteads, and our fishing-villages, such scant local records as we may gather of this deeply interesting past.

As already stated, George Fox first visited Yorkshire in 1651-2, travelling by way of Doncaster, Balby, Wakefield, Beverley, York, where he speaks to Priest

Bowles in the Minster ; to Cleveland, Staithes, Whitby, Scarborough, "across the Wolds" Malton and the "towns thereabouts," Pickering and Holderness. In all, he paid the county twelve visits, the last in 1679-80, eleven years before his death. Of his first visit he says in his "Journal" of both Whitby and Scarborough, "We had some services for the Lord ; there are large meetings settled there since." He had great meetings at Malton. At one of them he says, "a wild, drunken man . . . was so reached that he came to me as lowly as a lamb." "Some people durst not come for fear of their relations . . . for it was thought a strange thing then to preach in houses and not go to the church."

At Pickering, where the justices held their sessions in the Steeple-house, he had a meeting in the School-room, and "Justice Robinson's priest was very lowly and loving, and would have paid for my dinner, but I would by no means suffer it." "The old priest" who had lent the School-house, a Mr. Boyes, accompanied Fox when he passed up into the country, and when they came to what Fox calls a "town," the bells rang for Fox to preach in the church. It was on this expedition that Fox felt called to sit on a haystack and famish the people from words. It must have been an extraordinary spectacle, for Fox says that he spoke nothing for some hours. The silent Quaker, with his impressive face and piercing eyes, the puzzled people, coming and going and ever coming in greater numbers as the wonder grew and the news spread. The faithful Boyes, much pestered by inquisitive questions, "What does it mean, when will he speak,

when will he begin ? ”—urges patience : “ the people,” he explains, “ had in the past to wait a long time upon Christ before he spoke.” Yet hour runs into hour and the Quaker is mute as the grave. Suddenly the features stir, a light shines in the eyes, the lips move, and the vibrant voice of the preacher stills the crowd to a tense silence. “ They were struck by the Lord’s power, the word of life reached to them, and there was a general convincement amongst them.” One curious double effect this sermon produced. “ Mr. Boyes,” cried the people, “ we owe you some money for tithes, pray come and take it.” “ But he threw up his hands and said he had enough, he would have none of it ; they might keep it, and he praised the Lord he had enough.”

Of his second journey Fox writes, “ The Lord said unto me, ‘ If but one man or woman were raised up by his power, to stand and live in the same Spirit that the prophets and apostles were in, who gave forth the Scriptures, that man or woman should shake all the country in their profession for ten miles round.’ ” And coming to Pendle Hill, a mount of vision for this seer of God, he was moved of the Lord to go up to the top of it, “ which I did with difficulty, it was so very steep and high. When I was come to the top I saw the sea bordering upon Lancashire. From the top of this hill the Lord let me see in what places he had a great people to be gathered.” Where is the Quaker sonneteer to sing of this Peak in Darien ?

At the close of the visit in 1652, Fox, passing over into Westmoreland, holds his wonderful meeting at Firbank Chapel. Here Francis Howgill and John

Audland, afterwards eminent Quaker preachers, were present.

During his sixth journey in 1660, the great general meeting for discipline was held at Skipton, about business relating to the Church, both in this nation and beyond the seas, an evidence of the growing needs of the fellowship, and of Fox's gathering apprehension in the face of unbalanced individualism. It was this year that James Nayler died.

On his eighth visit in 1665, Fox travels from Lancaster Jail, baiting his horse by the way at Malton, to enter Scarborough Castle, a prisoner for truth. Here he lies for some time in a cell on the sea side, much open, where the rain drove in forcibly, "so that the water came over my bed and ran about the room that I was fain to skim it up with a platter." I shall not tell again a well-known tale. How Fox overbore opposition, won his enemies, captured the heart of Jordan Crosslands, the Governor, and passed out a free man on the 1st of September, 1666, with this testimony from the garrison, "that he is as stiff as a tree and as pure as a bell; for we could never bow him." His first act was to go "about three miles to a large general meeting at a Friend's house, that had been a chief constable."—I suspect that this was at Burniston. Returning to Scarborough, he had a meeting at Peter Hodgson's house. "To this," says Fox, "came one called a lady and other great persons, also a young man, son to the Baliff of the town, who had been convinced while I was in prison." At a priest's house "towards the sea" he is visited by Friends, including Philip Scafe, who had been minister—



as Croese the historian tells us, "of a publick church at a little village . . . near to Whitby, called Robin Hood's Bay." He was convinced during Fox's first journey, at Staithes, at a meeting with the Ranters, and accompanied Fox in his walk by the edge of the high cliffs there, when as Fox suggests, his presence prevented a raging Scotch priest from pushing the Quaker apostle into the sea.

Several large meetings are held at this time, notably near Hull and Malton, and on his ninth journey in 1669, Fox visits the Quarterly Meeting at York.

Of his eleventh visit in 1678, he writes, "I spent two weeks in Yorkshire . . . and many heavenly meetings I had." In 1680 he visits the Quaker prisoners in York Castle, and journeying south into Lincolnshire, passes finally from our view.

Undoubtedly these twelve visits played an important part in the building up of the fellowship. The earlier visits laid the foundations and the later put the coping stones in place. But it would be a great mistake to attribute everything to Fox.

The printed list of the founders of Yorkshire Quakerism will give some idea of the extent to which the missionary labours were shared by others. With the exception of Fox, the names are arranged not in order of importance, but alphabetically. Were precedence determined by the value of the service, the name of William Dewsbury would undoubtedly come second to that of Fox.

The beginning of things with William Dewsbury was in 1651, at Synderhill Green, near Balby, at the house of Lieutenant Roper, where Thomas Goodyear,



James Nayler and Richard Farnsworth, among others, were attending Fox's meetings. "At an evening meeting there," says the latter, "William Dewsbury and Ann his wife came and heard me declare the truth. And after the meeting, it being a moonlight night, I walked out into the field; and William Dewsbury and his wife came to me into the field, and confessed to the truth and received it; and after some time he did testify to it." In the narrative of the Early "Breakings Forth of Truth," collected by order of the Morning Meeting in 1704, and now being published by the Friends' Historical Society, we have interesting witness to the character and power of that testimony. From the Yorkshire records, not yet published, I take the following:—"In 1652, William Dewsbury, who doubtless was the messenger of God to many of us," visits East Yorkshire "exhorting to repentance and to believe in ye Light which did shine in our hearts . . . and those about Malton, Liverton, Staithes and Egton Bridge which had received G.F. did also gladly receive him."

Some of the first-fruits of William Dewsbury's preaching may be named:—

Joseph Allatson in Harwood Dale; Richard Cockerill in Hackness; Roger Cass in Hutton Bushell; John Whitehead and his wife and four others at Scarborough Castle; Christopher and Jonas Hedley, Thomas Sedman, Jonathan Wasson, Elliner Weller, in Scarborough town. On the Wolds some at Cotham and Harpham. Robert and Grace Barwick at Kelk, noted pillars and hospitable to ministers in the early Quaker Church; three at Bridlington Quay, Marmaduke

Storr in Holderness, with many more in that neighbourhood and at Crake.

The bare recital of these first fruits is however of small avail unless we give play to our historical imagination. This may be stimulated by the testimony of Kelk Monthly Meeting, which, in a glowing account of Dewsbury's service states that "many faces did gather paleness at his preaching." It was doubtless the earnestness and power of his unmeasured self-sacrifice which established Leeds and Halifax meetings in 1651, and in 1652 or 1653, through the conviction by Dewsbury of Christopher Taylor of the "Chappel in the Bryer betwixt Brighouse and Halifax," was instrumental in settling a meeting at Bradford.

Locally we have interesting evidence of the spreading influence of this apostle. One of his converts, Richard Cockerill of Hackness already named, died, so we are informed by the Hackness Parish Register, on

"Wednesday, the XIII. day of September, 1653, and was buried the next day, being Thursday. And there was many of them they call Quakers at his buryell. And Mr. Proude did exhort and argue with them at the grave, and they held out that that work which they had in them was not wrought by the Word, which I was sorry to heare, but they said they mayd use of the Word only to try whether it were right or noe."

So early, in a remote and peaceful hamlet, enshrined in forest amid the heather moors, did the great principle of the Inward Light find witness.

In that same year, when Quakers and priest

disputed by an open grave in Hackness Churchyard, a spiritual earthquake shook the market town of Malton. Two hundred people "met to wait upon the Lord," and "did continue," writes Richard Farnsworth to Margaret Fell, "three or four days together, and did scarce part day or night. I was with them. Twice the mighty power of the Lord was made manifest. Almost all the room was shaken." And with this result—"that the men of Malton burnt their ribbons and silk and other fine commodities, because they might not be abased by pride." In which act the men of Malton showed themselves of like kidney with the fiery preacher of the Duomo in Florence, and stirred like resentment in the breasts of their contemporaries. An anonymous quarto volume appeared printed in Cornhill before the year had run out, which Fox called "a book of darkness, railing and lies." Its lengthy title, distilling in each line the poison of religious malice, denounces the "Quaking and entranced faction," which is "discovered to be a new branch of an old root revived by Satan," whose "unchristian practises and opinions" are to be "abhorred and avoided by all holy Soules." And in the text proceeds as follows:—"Whether when about Malton there are towards 200 or 300 neglecting their callings, young and old, to compare notes of their entranced madness, it concerns not a church, nay, a Commonwealth, if it were no more than Pagan, to look to it and prevent the growth of further mischief." With this meeting in Malton claiming attention so far away as distant Cornhill, we may say that the Quaker campaign, in the district with which we are concerned, is fairly begun!

To follow this campaign in detail would be a fascinating but impossible pursuit. The limit of time forbids any attempt to cover the ground. The printed list of Quaker leaders referred to, may serve as a guide to intending students, but we must confine ourselves to a narrower field.

When Fox died, so great had been the response to his labours that the Quakers were the largest of the Nonconformist sects.

Two considerations press as this phenomenon of early Quakerism, its speedy and wide diffusion, comes before us :—

- (a) The character of the men who did the work.
- (b) The character of their message.

To deal with the first, let us select three names, all of them local, and perhaps not all as familiar as they should be. Roger Hebden, of Malton ; Thomas Thompson, of Skipsea ; and John Whitehead, of Owstwick.

Of the first we learn most in a little book entitled “A Plain Account of the Christian Experiences, etc., of Roger Hebden,” published in 1700. As is usual with these early Quaker lives, the book contains by way of introduction, three testimonies. The first dated Malton, 16th 1st mo., 1695–6, is signed by nine Friends among whom I note the honoured name of Taylor—in this case Thomas Taylor. They speak of Roger as having the “mighty power of God upon him,” as “consolating of the innocent” ; but “sharp, powerful and penetrating upon the man of sin,” and add, “There were some sober people in this town of Malton (who were not Friends) that sometimes were



very desirous to know when Roger Hebden would be at our Meeting (he then dwelling a few miles out of town) who, after they had heard him, would freely express their satisfaction."

This testimony is followed by one dated Kirby Moorside, 23rd of the 12th Month, 1695, and signed by twelve Friends, four of whom are Stocktons. They speak of him as "very tender to the ignorant," and "very plain" in his method of delivery, and conclude that "as to his own innocent life and blameless conversation we need say the less because it was so well known to many"—indeed, "to all the people round about . . . for many miles."

The third testimony is signed I.L., signifying Isaac Lindley, a weighty York Friend. He describes Roger Hebden's entrance upon the ministry in 1652, and adds that he had a "reaching testimony that pricked many to the hearts. And the better to follow Truth's Service he turned over his house and shop at Malton to a Friend, and gave over trading, and went to live of his own Land, for he had an estate of his own, and served truth at his own charge."

Turning to Roger Hebden's "Plain Account" of himself, we learn that he was a woollen draper, his father being of Appleton-le-Street.

In 1654 he went to the Steeple-house at Newton, near Tadcaster, where he spoke probably, as was the permitted custom of the day, after the priest had finished his sermon. He was imprisoned in York Castle, not for this speaking in church,—which was no offence,—but for denouncing the priest as a hireling. Later, we find him writing to Enoch Sinclair, "Parish



Teacher," as he calls him, of Slingsby, in much the same strain of testimony. The letter follows the usual course of the Quaker argument in such cases. Roger denounces tithes and adds, "But thou and such like will either see or hear from man, what you may have before you will sit down with a people." After being "sharp, powerful and penetrating" upon the "man of sin" for the space of five pages, he concludes that Christ did not ordain the ordinances;—"prove that he did, if thou canst, by plain Scripture, and let me hear it in writing; and do not back-bite—that is a work of darkness . . . and what is said of thee and thy brethren, do not call it railing, for it is no harsher than Christ telling the Jews that they were of their Father the Devil." Which is something quaint by way of admonition!

Elsewhere in the "Plain Account," we are given a hint as to the source of this correspondence. Our Quaker is writing of the practice of exchanging livings "as one did, to wit Priest Sinclair, of Slingsby, near Malton, in Yorkshire, who having within a few years' time been at three places or livings as they are called; being come to the fourth I asked him the cause why." His reply was that in his previous livings he did not see that fruit of his ministry that he desired. But Roger will not have this. "His conscience will witness with me that it was his own earthly profit more than the people's good. . . For where he is now is near if not more than double the value of that he left." It is not a little disconcerting to the worthy woollen-draper's argument to find, on referring to Calamy's list of ejected ministers, that Sinclair of Slingsby went out into the

wilderness for conscience sake with the other noble 2,000 in 1662 ! We cannot easily judge at this distance between Hebden and Sinclair. It is at least evident from a perusal of the " Plain Account " that Roger lived a life of faithful, sacrificing love, suffering more than once in York Castle for truth's sake, and, if a little harsh upon hirelings, testifying with power to the true inwardness of religion, and the paltriness of worldly ambition. He has written a general exhortation, which may serve as his parting word :—

" And thou whose desire is to get wealth . . . and may call this a provident care for thyself and family, thou infidel that darest not trust God. . . . Therefore take heed of that which would be high, that is not of God. Its the lowly that the Lord loves. So all of you I exhort to dwell low at the feet of Jesus—wait for to hear his word." Worship in spirit that which is spirit, " not only in form " or " by mere imitation " and " this leads into Peace and into the endless life which changes not . . . where is Peace . . . unutterable."

With Thomas Thompson, of Skipsea (distinguished as " the elder," from his son a minister, who travelled in America), I should have liked to spend some time but we must be satisfied with a brief introduction.

When twenty-one, he hears of Fox " in these parts," namely in 1652, and in a little volume called " An Account of the Life and Service of Thomas Thompson," we read an interesting account of the opinion then current about the great Quaker leader. " They (*i.e.* Thompson's friends) told me that he in his behaviour was very reserved, not using any needless words or discourses that tended not to edification, and that he

used not respect of persons ; very temperate in his eating and drinking, his apparel homely yet decent ; as for his doctrine, he directed people to the Light of Christ in their consciences to guide them to God."

In the same year "about the 6th or 7th mo.," Thomas Thompson heard "of a people raised up at or about Malton that were called Quakers, which was the first time that I heard of that name being given to any people." These he hears "by most people spoken against," but can find them guilty of nothing, only "that they were a fantastical and conceited people, and burnt their lace and ribbons and other superfluous things," and "fell into strange fits of quaking and trembling." Soon after he hears that the Quakers are come to Bridlington, at which he "greatly rejoices in his spirit," and then that William Dewsbury was at Frodingham, between Driffield and Hornsea. Thomas is a lad in service at Brigham and cannot leave his work in the day time, so he sets off in the night, which, being "very dark, none would go, so I went alone." The young lad trudges by the rough country ways, stumbling doubtless over stones and in bog-holes, but with the winged feet of a consuming zeal ; till, trembling with eagerness, he reaches the house where Dewsbury is lodging. The door is opened and in the lighted room he sees William writing "and " (I quote Thompson's own words) "the rest of the company were sitting in great silence, seeming to be much retired in mind, and fixed towards God ; their countenances grave and solid withal, preached unto me and confirmed, what I had before believed, that they were the people of the Lord." Soon William puts aside his writing, and

“in the power and wisdom of God, declares the truth.” Thomas Thompson, to use the current Quaker expression, is “convinced” and in that same month enters on the ministry. He is now frequently with William Dewsbury, John Whitehead, and sometimes James Nayler, in their journeys in the East Riding.

In a testimony by Thomas Thompson, prefixed to the “Written Gospel Labours of John Whitehead,” we are told of a visit to Malton in the course of one of these journeys. Thomas Stubbs has been in the company.

“The next morning it was with Thomas Stubbs to part with William and go towards Beverley; so we sat down and were in prayer and supplication to the Lord much of the day; William labouring to strengthen Thomas and encourage him in the exercise and service for the Lord, till about the third hour in the Afternoon; So the day being far spent, Thomas took leave, and departed towards Beverley; Then William and I made ready for our journey towards Malton; but William’s care and travel being great, for the prosperity of Sion, we got not from Friends there, till after the setting of the sun; then, having twelve or thirteen miles to go, we set forwards, and many times run upon the Wolds, and it being a clear Moonshine night, we got to Malton about the 8th or 9th hour of the night. There we found Brethren and Friends Assembled in the house of Robert Hebden, Richard Farnsworth (another Travelling Friend in the Ministry) being there with them; so we were greatly comforted and refreshed in the Love of God, with our Friends that night. There I first see dear John Whitehead, who was then a soldier at Scarborough, and was come thither to meet with R. F. or visit Friends; his mouth was there opened in Prayer to the Lord. There we stay’d the next Day, which was mostly spent in waiting upon the Lord, and in Exhortation, Prayers and Praises unto God Almighty.”



Of the rest of Thomas Thompson's labours we must not speak in detail. He was imprisoned three times in York Castle, in all for ten years and five and a half months ; eleven weeks for refusing to swear " and to pay tythe hen, eggs, smoke penny and offerings to the value of 9d. or thereabouts," and on the third occasion no less than nine long years for refusing to go to church or to pay for the repairs of Skipsea Steeple-house. When not in Jail, he is constantly travelling in the North and South of England, in Scotland, and up and down the Yorkshire Coast. In the year of Fox's death, he speaks of " a blessed meeting at Staintondale, the Lord owning us with his love, and the sweet enjoyment of his heavenly presence " ; and after a journey to Cleveland returns " by way of Kirby Moorside, where he had a glorious and heavenly meeting." He had indeed an affection for this place, for he singles it out for special mention. On his next journey, he says " at Kirby Moorside my soul was sweetly refreshed among Friends in a sense of the Heavenly Power of God." He witnesses by speech and in writing against gaming, horse-races and cards, and against the " maintenance of worldly priests," and seeks continually as the testimony of Friends asserts " to appoint Meetings in Places where there had been few or none before." Three months before his death, the following brief Minute entered in the Monthly Meeting book of Scarborough, affords pathetic illustration of the heavy sacrifice this constant service entailed :

" 4th mo., 1704 —A collection of £13 10s. 6d. for the relief of Thomas Thompson, of Skipsea in



Holderness," was sent from Scarborough and Whitby to Quarterly Meeting.

The last of our Quaker exemplars, John Whitehead (not to be confounded with the famous George) was a soldier in Scarborough Castle, who, to quote William Penn's preface to Whitehead's printed works, "changed his weapons, warfare and captain about 1654, when he listed himself under the banner of Christ." He proved a mighty warrior in Christ's holy cause. The testimonies, which, as in the case of Hebden and Thompson, preface Whitehead's book, called in brief "The Written Gospel Labours of John Whitehead," bear unanimous witness to his faithful service.

One writes of his preaching "a word in due season he had to administer . . . never very large but short, sound and weighty." Another that "he was a man of such a meek and quiet spirit that his life and conversation preached daily amongst whom he came . . . his words were few but very savoury." A third writes that "he travelled on his feet through many counties," that "he did labour and travel both day and night that he might make the Gospel without charge, and his care was very great to settle meetings for worship." He would go many miles to visit a single family, and, most beautiful testimony of all, "he thought no pains too great to gain a soul to God." "I never," says the same writer, "did see him shrink at any trouble or persecution. . . he suffered many long imprisonments without murmuring or repining . . . if any difference happened amongst Friends he was a man of sorrow for it and did take care both day and night until it was ended,"

John Whitehead, who figures in Fox's "Journal" as the bearer of the order of release from Scarborough Castle, was quite a copious writer, as were many Quakers who suffered long terms of imprisonment. Joseph Smith, in his Catalogue, enumerates forty separate writings, short and long, treatises, epistles and appeals, one printed in Dutch and some written in partnership with others, to which may be added two not known to Smith,—a total of forty-two in all. These include an epistle "for Friends at Whitbay seat (Whitby), Osmotherley, and in Blackamores (Blakey Moor above Goathland), Cleveland, Bishoprick (Durham) and that ways." "Ministers among the people of God [called Quakers] no Jesuites"; (a misconception that had frequently to be met). "A reproof . . . to certain professors in and about Hull and Beverley, etc."

Of his constant travels, his many sufferings, his long imprisonment in Lincoln Castle and elsewhere, we must say nothing. We get frequent glimpses of the man himself, preaching on the moors or labouring with his hands in the harvest-time at home, but one incident must suffice to lift the veil on all this activity.

"In 1656, 3rd mo. 25th day, being the First Day," says Thomas Thompson in his testimony "he had a Meeting at Hunvanby (Hunmanby) on the Wolds, where there had been none before; and there not being a convenient Room in the house, which was appointed for the meeting, we assembled in a little Close adjoining. But there came a great number of Rude People, who made much stir and noise and threw stones at Friends in a desperate manner, so that we could not enjoy our meeting at that place. Then we drew into a Barn where for a little time the People were indifferent quiet, and the Truth was thorow John, freely

declared ; but it was not long before some rude and wicked Persons began to make a Disturbance ; and in great Fury sought to make their way through the press to John, who stood still and with great Boldness and Power declared the Truth ; Now Friends standing close, both before and on each side of John, they could not easily come to him ; notwithstanding they pressed earnestly towards him, violently pulling many Friends with Fury out of their way ; and with great wrath they raged like the Sodomites about the door of Righteous Lot ; and truly the Lord wonderfully chained them at that time ; for they were even mad with wrath and Fury, and had pulled the most of Friends out of their way so that very few were left between John and them, Robert Barwick and I standing close together right before him and a woman or two on either side, no other Friends being left near us ; and the rude Rabble (like the Beasts at Ephesus) furiously striving above an hour before us, in much Choller, Wrath, and Madness, shaking their fists at us, swearing many terrible oaths, and desperately threatening us in a cruel manner, yet (blessed be God), they had not Power to lay a hand upon us to hurt us, nor to pull us from our standing. . . . So after they had strove a long time and swelled in Fury raging like the waves of the sea in a Tempest and nothing prevailed, they suddenly turned their Backs (leaving us in our places) and departed the Room. Then we had a precious time in waiting upon the Lord, and J. Whitehead was preciously opened in his testimony."

So much for the character of the men who did the work. What was it in their message that aroused this fierce opposition and at the same time so won men's hearts ? What *was* the Quaker Gospel ? We will keep true to our determination to be local, nor shall we suffer by it, for we can gather the main lines of the Quaker Gospel from two of Whitehead's publications, "The Enmity between the two Seeds," signed "From

the righteous seed, whom the world in scorn called Quakers, whose bodies are in outward bonds in the common Jail in Northampton,”—and “A small Treatise of these things which I have seen and learned of the father ; writ in the Prison-house in Aylesbury the 3rd mo., 1661.” Comparing and analysing the two, we get something as follows :—

“Christ is the light of the world which in conscience makes evil manifest. Those who love sin hate the light, but the light witnesses to their condemnation that it is just. Therefore repent ; God’s love has power to lead out of darkness. But it must be inwardly felt and experienced. The knowledge of Christ in Jerusalem can do nothing without the knowledge of Christ in the heart. An intellectual belief in justification, through faith in Christ’s blood is inadequate. We must know God’s grace. In our own will we hate the light and are destroyed. God seeks freely through the Inward Light of Christ to break the inclination or will to sin. Grace—God’s free grace given to all who ask in sincerity—that is, in faith—is the power to love the light,—that power by virtue of which we resist and overcome temptation.” This involves an inevitable struggle and practical issue in everyday experience. “In the strait gate of self-denial you must walk and the daily cross of Christ you must take up or you cannot be a disciple of Christ.”

Grace and justification with John Whitehead are *in essence* the same thing.

“I do witness,” he says, “that faith in Christ’s blood justifieth, and the same faith that justifies purifies the heart and the blood of Jesus cleanseth them that



be faithful from all sin. . . And this faith is not a dead talk, but it is living and is a mystery held in a pure conscience." In other words, God's free grace, which, interpreted, is the power to believe in goodness in a saving and living fashion, is a mysterious power, which nevertheless can be felt, and which as it is yielded to, purifies. The whole stress is here laid upon an inward change. Moreover with the logical boldness which characterised the first Quakers, he travels into what we should call the region of speculative theology and insists on the present possibility of entire sanctification. God is able to save to the uttermost even while the soul is "yet in the body." Let the priests be warned who would put the "day of the Lord far off." As for the Scriptures, he does not undervalue them (in his "Enmity between the two Seeds," a pamphlet of 39 pages, there are 277 marginal references to Scripture both Old and New Testament), but he seeks "rather to shew unto People the Eternal life whereof they writ, which we have seen, felt and handled as they did." "So far," says Whitehead, "as they (that is the Scriptures) are free from false transcriptions and corrupt translations" (Oh! shade of Rendel Harris!) "I own them to be the very words and true sayings of God."

Thus much for the simple theology. For the rest, the points he makes, sometimes in felicitous phrase, are in accord with the well-known testimony of the early Friends. First, there is the witness to the Free Ministry. I quote our author: "I do witness that not any minister of Christ is made by the will of man, nor fitted for his ministry by humane learning nor



sharpness of wit, nor by any natural gift, but by the gift of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Which gift cannot be bought nor sold for money, nor limited to times, but is free." He denies the virtue of "particular houses"—no outward building in itself is sacred, the heart, not a "heap of brick or stone," is the true temple of God. As for the ordinances, these are spiritual, baptism is no outward rite but a spiritual experience which "brings down into death with Christ and into the fellowship of his sufferings," the supper is no special meal, but communion at a perpetual table of the Lord, "feeding on living bread," and "drinking into one spirit, which makes us of one heart and of one soul."

Does he deny the ordinances? Nay, he does not deny the ordinances. These are the ordinances of Christ and "these I own. Self-denial and the daily Cross, Love to one another, to do to all men as we would be done unto, and not to swear at all, and if any smite thee on one cheek to turn the other, and to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked and the like."

Here speaks the true spirit of the early Friends, and here we part with John Whitehead.

If we wonder at the rage of the people against such a man, let us at least do justice to them. The times were perilous. The civil war, the Protectorate, the Restoration, James II., the Revolution, and the coming of William and Mary, are the outward marks of a deep-seated political unrest. England was in the throes of a new birth. When none could trust his neighbour suspicion spread like a fire. The Protectorate rested on no divine right. Into the courts of justice step the Quakers, haled by the constable from a shouting tumult.

They refuse to remove the hat, to take the oath. The judges puzzled with their strange prisoners, visit them with severe punishment for defying the magistracy and the law. For the majesty of the law, in these days of doubtful authority, must be upheld at all cost. It is only as they learnt the probity of the Quaker, had proof of his law-abiding spirit, and saw that his contempt for human titles and perferments was but his fear of God, that they abated their fury toward him. Charles II. comes to the throne, and the wild scheming of the Fifth Monarchy men provokes a new terror. These Quakers who talk of an inward Christ and refuse hat honour must be in league with the King's enemies. Then down with them.

In spiritual matters the reasons for persecution are no less plain. The doctrine of the Inner Light, seemed to strike right across the main current of religious thought, which surged up against it in angry protest. The men of that generation had found in the Bible a newly opened store-house of Divine truth, and saw in the Quaker teaching a belittling of its authority, a slight upon the Holy Name of God. It was in large measure a case of misunderstanding. Men like Baxter and Bunyan misread the Quaker, or at least were more alive to the dangers attendant upon his doctrine, than to the spiritual grandeur and quality of his message.

Yet say what we will in extenuation, there remains the greed of informers who battered on the distrains; the malice of unjust judges and cruel jailers, the harshness of religious intolerance, the blind irritation of ignorant crowds, resentful of anything they could not

comprehend ; the sheer hate of men resisting goodness because they loved evil. Quakerism at heart was nothing new, it was but a faithful application, in its logical completeness, of Gospel truth. What other people *believed* or *said* they believed, the Quakers *did*. And for this more than anything else they suffered. How they suffered we have not space to tell, but they suffered in the true spirit of the Christian martyr.

William Dewsbury, nineteen years in jail, says that his prisons were palaces and his locks and bars precious jewels. I believe he spoke truth. The spirit which bore so unflinchingly one of the cruellest persecutions recorded in all the long story of human wrong, never found more beautiful expression than in the broken words of the dying Nayler, repentant and victorious at the last :—

“ It sees to the end of all temptation. As it bears no evil in itself, so it conceives none in thought to any other. If it be betrayed it bears it, for its ground and spring is the mercies and forgiveness of God ; its crown is meekness, its life is everlasting love unfeigned, and it takes its kingdom with entreaty and not with contention, and keeps it by lowliness of mind.”

## THE RISE OF QUAKERISM IN YORKSHIRE.

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### LECTURE II.

**I**N considering the rise of Quakerism in Yorkshire we have discussed the broad aspects of the Quaker movements, we have done bare justice to the parts played by Fox in the work of upbuilding, and, passing by the more famous names, we have dwelt in some detail on the character and the message of three early local evangelists, Roger Hebden of Malton, Thomas Thompson of Skipsea, and John Whitehead of Owstwick. The words and sufferings of these devoted servants will have baptized us in measure into the spirit of those early days when, as Fox foresaw, a single Quaker could "shake all the country for ten miles round."

To-day we shall set ourselves a different task. We shall inquire :—

1st.—What were the immediate outward fruits of local Apostolic Quakerism ?

2nd.—What was the inner life of the early fellowship ?

3rd.—What was the subsequent development ?

In pursuit of these inquiries we shall go as far as possible to the original documents, and endeavour to make the past speak to us in its own language.

To-morrow morning we will discuss such facts as we may have gathered, in their bearing upon the future development of the Society of Friends.

First, then, *The immediate outward fruits of the local Apostolic Quakerism.*

Those not acquainted with the facts of the early Evangelism, and accustomed to regard the Quakers as a quiet, middle-class Society, mainly gathered in a few towns here and there, and relatively numerous or prominent in some half-dozen centres all told, must be prepared for a striking contrast when they examine into the prevailing conditions of the latter half of the seventeenth century.

As already stated, when Fox died in 1691, the Friends numbered 50,000 or 60,000, and were the largest single body of Nonconforming Christians. Most figures of the period are guess-work, and as no reliable statistics are available, it is not safe to trust over much to any proportionate estimates of the relation borne by Friends to the whole population.

If we accept Gregory King's figures of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  millions as the population of England at the accession of Queen Anne, and take the estimate made by John Stephenson Rowntree of 60,000 as representing the number of Friends, we get one Friend in every 92 of the population of England and Wales, or a percentage of 1.09 and if further we take the higher of J. S. Rowntree's estimates of the number of Friends in Yorkshire, viz., 6,000, and the population of Yorkshire at 780,000 (the figure accepted by Macaulay), we get one Friend in every 130, or .76 per cent.

The same proportion to the present population would yield us in London Yearly Meeting 350,000 Friends, instead of a total membership of 17,617 or .005 of the population in 1903, or again *thirty-six*



*thousand Friends in Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting*, instead of a beggarly two thousand, seven hundred and fifty-five.

In 1669, eighteen years after Fox first crossed the borders of Yorkshire, there were fourteen Yorkshire Monthly Meetings against the present number of five. The map\* displayed in this room will give you their names and boundaries. Two have been lost by absorption in Durham Quarterly Meeting, namely Richmond and Guisboro', which were in part transferred respectively in 1816 and 1850.

Malton and Scarborough Monthly Meetings, sadly depleted, were merged in Pickering Monthly Meeting in 1788, and in 1858 were joined by Hull Monthly Meeting, which, composed of the wreckage of Owstwick and Cave, had existed since 1803. Of this union was born the wonderful compound name of "Pickering and 'Ull." So inexplicable is this geographical mixture, apart from a knowledge of its historical origin, that winged rumour has whispered of strangers to the Quaker faith who, knowing the secret, have passed the door-keepers at Yearly Meeting by murmuring the mystic formula.

Kelk Monthly Meeting, nominally absorbed in this compound, has really disappeared, for Bridlington alone remains to witness to past glories when that Monthly Meeting was a nursery of Quaker prophets.

Of Owstwick, where John Whitehead laboured during the early years of his ministry, Hull alone is left; Elloughton has gone, Thirsk, in 1827, was divided between York, Guisboro' and Darlington, while Settle

\* See Appendix iv.

and Knaresboro' disappeared in 1853 down the ravenous jaws of the unwieldy Brighthouse, which all sensible people agree ought now to disgorge some of its spoils.

So much for the Monthly Meetings. Of the Particular Meetings it is less easy to speak with certainty. John Stephenson Rowntree, in his "Quakerism Past and Present," says: "At this time (in 1670-1679) there were fourteen Monthly Meetings in Yorkshire, seventy-two Meeting-houses, and Friends are known to have resided in three hundred towns, villages and hamlets." To what extent were there *Meetings for Worship* beyond the seventy-two Meeting-houses spoken of? Light is thrown on this question by the Quarter Sessions records. I notice that on Sunday next Friends are going to Laskill in Bilsdale. In 1827, when Thirsk Monthly Meeting was in process of dissolution, a schedule of the Meeting-houses and Burial-grounds which were coming to Guisboro' was drawn up, and it is stated in a minute of the Monthly Meeting held at Castleton in 4th month of that year concerning Bilsdale (*i.e.* Laskill) that there are no title-deeds, but that it is the property of Lord Feversham. In 1882, Lord Feversham incited by the Vicar of Helmsley, an ardent High Churchman, tried to get the property from Friends for the use of the Church. The inhabitants, who had been represented as desiring this transference, responded with a document expressing their wish that the Meeting-house might still remain in the hands of Friends. Alfred Edward Pease took the matter up and the attempt was defeated. In gathering his evidence he searched the North Riding Quarter Sessions Records, which, he says are full of most

interesting and valuable references to Quakers,—and extracted therefrom a list of Meeting-houses in the 17th and early 18th centuries.

The following is the preface to the list as it appears in the records :—

“At Thirske, Oct. 8th, 1689, under an order etc., etc., in pursuance of an Act for exempting their majesties Protestant subjects, etc. etc., it was certified by their justices etc., that in the following places are meeting houses for certain persons dissenting from the church of England called Quakers, viz :”—and here follows a list of eighty-two places, all in the North Riding.

Of interest to the intending visitors next Sunday, we may note *en passant* the following extract, also taken by Sir A. E. Pease :—

“North Riding Quarter Sessions holden at Guisboro’ July 16th, 1734.

“ . . . the house lately builtt nigh Laskill-bridge in Bilsdale is appointed to be set apart for the worship of Almighty God by the people called Quakers at the request of John Petch and Will. Barker.”

But this is a mere antiquarian digression. In addition to the list of names quoted, Sir A. E. Pease found that 32 licences had been granted between October 2nd, 1677, and October 2nd, 1716. Eleven of these names occur in the list of 1689, so that we get a total of 103 places in the North Riding in which Friends worshipped. This list, however, is not complete. In the Meeting-house safe at Scarborough is the following licence, signed by Henry Frankland, Clerk of the Peace at Stoxley, July 10th, 1705 :—

“ These are to certify whom it doth or may concern that a house in Hutton Bushell is certified to this court to be set apart for Religious worship and registered accordingly.”

This was lodged in the hands of Peter Garbutt, a leading Scarborough Friend, and entered upon the minutes.

We must also add 32 others known, but not included in either list, making a total of 136 for the North Riding.

In the East Riding there were at least 43 Meetings in 1669, and in the West Riding over 100. We thus get a grand total,—probably incomplete,—of 279. The number of Particular and Allowed Meetings in the Quarterly Meeting in 1903 was 37. It would not be strictly fair, however, to draw a comparison, for many of these early meetings were in private houses, barns and hired rooms, and would be more or less of an ephemeral character, if we may judge by a list at the beginning of a minute-book of Kirby Moorside Preparative Meeting, professing to give the Particular Meetings in Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting about 1710, and which yields us a total of only 68. This view of the matter receives further support when examination is made of the West Riding Quarter Sessions Records. In an article on Non-Parochial Registers in the first number of the published transactions of the Congregational Historical Society, Bryan Dale writes :—

“ The extraordinary religious activity of the Society of Friends at this period (*i.e.*, 1689) as well as during the preceding forty years was only equalled by their rapid decline in zeal and numbers a few years afterwards,” and connects this statement with the information that “ over



200 Nonconformist places of worship were certified in the West Riding alone, after the Toleration Act came into operation," the majority of them "by the people of God called Quakers," and "*most of them private dwelling houses.*"

These particulars, nevertheless, indicate what might have been. However transient, Quakerism had taken root in 279 Yorkshire towns and hamlets. The pity is, that the root so quickly withered.

I shall not, of course, read this long list to you, but it may be profitable to recite those of local interest, remembering that communities of country folk under the Quaker name once gathered in them all. They are :

Near York :—Nun Monkton, Green Hammerton, Tadcaster, Fulford, Dunnington, Strensall, Sutton-on-the-Forest, Huby and Tollerton.

Near Malton :—Aclam, Leavening, Birdsall, Settrington, Rillington, Scampston, Marishes, Oldstead, Ampleforth, and Hovingham.

Near Kirby Moorside :—Hutton le Hole, Gillamoor, Rosedale, Farndale and Bilsdale, Norton and Helmsley.

Near Scarborough :—Harwood Dale, Silpho, Hackness, Burniston, Stainton Dale, Hutton Bushell, Wykeham, Urton, Ayton, and Seamer.

Near Whitby :—Lairpool, Fylingdale, Sandsend, and of course many more.

The larger map has been referred to as recording the number of places in which Friends were known to reside. For the 17th and opening decade of the 18th centuries, the total is, so far as I have been able to ascertain 464. The present number *in the same area* is about 112.

Insecure as these statistics may be, they are not far from the truth, and serve to call up before our



inward eye some faint picture of the impress which Fox, Dewsbury, Stephen Crisp, and local apostles like John Whitehead left upon their generation. Through lonely dales, where the bracken reddens at autumn and the trout-streams tumble to the sea ; where the long swell of the high moorlands sweeps the horizon ; or where the sea-gulls scream and the spray breaks over the rocks, or the low sand-hills melt down the dismal coast ; by flat meadow-lands with kine and fields of corn ; over high, bare hills where the west wind storms with salt and sting of the Atlantic ; through the great vale with its far glimpses of Cathedral towers ; through narrow streets filled with the roar of the shingle on the slipway, and the smell of fish and shipping ; into broad market squares, among the wains and cracking whips and stumbling teams, to city and hamlet, sea-port and inland town, fearless and loving, come the Children of the Light.

Even dry figures can stir us if we let them speak. Those were great days of high courage, noble sacrifice and rich fruit. It is hard to come back to the present without discouragement, for the promise of the past has failed. But there is still the future.

Quakerism has waned where it was once strong—it would be foolish to ignore that fact, but when we contemplate the deserted villages, we need to recognise that the decline was not wholly spiritual. Economic changes account for something. In the time of Fox, not a quarter of the people lived in towns ; to-day 41 per cent. live in towns and cities, containing upwards of 50,000 inhabitants. Where Fox met one man we meet six.

By way of introduction to the inner life of the early fellowship, let us glance for a moment at the Yorkshire of this day. The huge manufacturing centres, with their network of railways and their forests of chimneys were of course unknown. No factory system had come to weaken the influence of the home-life, or to blacken the sky with smoke. The hills of the West Riding were lonely and wild, and her streams unpolluted ran clear and cool. In the dales of Craven, and in the romantic valleys of Skipton and Richmond, wool was still spun by the glow of the family hearth. The ancient one-thread wheel hummed through the long winter evenings, and camlets, russets, serges, tammies and calimancoes travelled on pack horses, from distant upland villages to the open street markets of Leeds and Halifax. We gather some idea of the volume of Yorkshire's staple trade, when we learn that the famous cloth market of Leeds held twice a week, was on the bridge over the Aire and that the sellers hung their pieces of cloth over the parapets. Yet a contemporary writer, Mrs. Fiennes, says of Leeds, "This is esteemed the wealthiest town of its bigness in the country," and of its inhabitants, she says, "they are esteemed very rich and very proud."

Only two other towns enjoyed celebrity, Sheffield and Hull. Sheffield had already turned her five streams to account, to assist in her iron trade, while Hull, without a single dock, was rapidly growing into a thriving port, employing more ships "in the trade to Greenland and the Greenland seas, in the fishing for whales there," than any other port, save London.

The population of York was certainly under

10,000, and until the close of the civil war there is constant complaint of its serious decay. Scarborough was hardly more than a fishing village, and bore no sort of relation to its present overweening opulence. It numbered only 6,000 in 1800. The people were still "on the land," and agriculture was their chief employment, but although as an industry it was relatively prosperous during the period under review, we must dismiss from our minds all idea of a social paradise. The greater part of the eastern counties was almost in its original state of natural wildness, and where now are cultivated fields, there were miles upon miles of barren waste. A typical 17th century farm, consisted of unmanured land, from which, during the winter, the poor pinched cattle could scarce gather herbage to keep them from starvation. An ill-cultivated patch grew oats and barley, the rest weeds. Quakerism flourished in the country districts, because the population was there; but we must not expect a cultured, critical community, demanding that their mental and spiritual hunger shall be fed by a hyper-mystical, occult philosophy. The people were uneducated, simple, homely, coarse, animal in their appetites, and yet not without that salt of Puritanism, of deep if sombre religious earnestness, which kept English life sweet even through the vicious revels of Charles II. Accustomed as we are to the dignity and repose of an ordered and respectable congregation, with its spiritual emotion on the curb, and to Whittier's description of the ancient Quaker "so calm, so pure, so true," we can scarcely realise the uncouth aspect of Quakerism in its earliest day. Listen to this,

presented to the Council of State by many noblemen, Justices of the Peace, Ministers and citizens of Lancashire,—a petition of complaint against Fox and Nayler on the grounds that they dissolved the “bond and unity that was between all sorts and ranks of men. . . and brought their own followers to such a pass that all of them, men, women, children and little ones, were, in their conventicles, agitated with strange and ridiculous motions, trembled, foamed, swole with their bellies,” etc., etc.

The courtly Penn, the refined Penington, the scholarly Barclay, may join the fellowship, but the rank and file are an unlettered folk, and their Meetings for Worship are often revival meetings, marked by the well-known psychological phenomena which, a century later, distinguished the Methodist movement. The drunken man who, at Fox’s meeting in Malton, became as lowly as a lamb, has his modern counterpart in many a Saturday night temperance mission, and the marked reference to the attendance of a real lady at one of his meetings in Scarborough, shows us that Fox was accustomed to sit down with a humbler class. When we speak of a meeting “run on Quaker lines,” we are too often confounding a later eighteenth century standard with the true Quaker type of the creative period. There is a world of difference both in spirit and in form. One is cold and fixed, and the other warm and fluid. In Fox’s day, the molten metal had not congealed.

After thus much circumlocution, we come now to our secondly :—“What was the inner life of the early fellowship ?”—and faithful to promise, we will go to



original documents. Do not be angry if they are dry ! Only he who has waded through pages of sprawling and faded writing, can know the true meaning of monotony, or sympathise in his understanding with the Arab when he spies an oasis in the wilderness. And yet this is not wholly true. There is a fascination, hard to describe, in these musty books, written by men who knew persecution, not by hearsay, but by experience ; who perhaps saw and heard Fox, Dewsbury and Whitehead in the flesh, and who, however we may grudge to confess it at times, were our spiritual ancestors (in a manner of speaking). Let us, then, with reverence take up, first the records of Scarborough Monthly Meeting. Let us go through them, adding afterwards the tit-bits of Guisborough, Malton and Kirby Moorside.

The first minute-book of Scarborough, Whitby and Stainton Dale Monthly Meeting dates from 1669 to 1687. The meeting was established by the Quarterly Meeting held at York on the 18th of 1st mo., 1666 $\frac{2}{3}$  (New Style, 18th March, 1669), or 235 years ago.

The First Monthly Meeting was actually held on 5th of 3rd mo., 1669, or as we should call it, the fifth of May. It met at the house of William Worfolk in Stainton Dale, and continued to meet there till the fourth of May, 1675, a period of six years. After that date, it was held at Scarborough, Whitby and Stainton Dale by rotation. At Scarborough, as in May of 1675, it was held at "our meeting-house," and at other times in Peter Hodgson's private house, and on one occasion, in September, 1683, at the house



of Thomas Russell. The minute recording the cost of Scarborough Meeting-house is as follows :—

“ The acct. what the house cost which Peter Hodgson, Senr. built for Scarborough in the year 1676 for the publique meetings of the Lord’s people (by men called Quakers) to meet in for ye worship and service of God. The first purchase and building the said meeting house upon the ground (with the charge of the writeings) cost £150 13s. 4d. Which was disbursed by the persons underwritten as followeth.”

Then appear 59 names, Peter heading Scarborough with £20, much the largest subscription. Twenty-seven men friends from Scarborough subscribe with him, among them Richard Priestman, one from Holderness, seventeen from Stainton Dale and elsewhere, Tomazen Smailes of Bridlington £5, and finally thirteen women Friends from Scarborough.

The minutes in the first book, covering a period of eighteen years, give little information as to the spiritual or social condition of the meeting. They indicate a quiet, methodical transaction of routine business, they record no admissions, no itinerancy of preachers, but are principally concerned with the relief of the poor. There are in all thirty-one collections for this purpose alone ; Whitby is the biggest contributor, and was either the richest or the largest meeting. In 1677, there is a record of a collection being ordered to be sent to the Quarterly Meeting for “ Friends in prison.”

Quaker books are regularly purchased and distributed, including the works of Edward Burroughs, Francis Howgill, Penn’s “ No Cross, No Crown,”

“The Christian Quaker,” of which Penn and George Whitehead were joint authors, and “The Spirit of the Martyrs,” by Ellis Hookes, the first predecessor of our present esteemed friend Isaac Sharp.

Seventy-nine intentions of marriage are recorded and whenever there are children by a previous marriage, provision is duly made for them. The first notice of a marriage taking place is on the 4th of February, 1671. There is one disownment, or testimony of denial,—that of a certain Edward Dutchman—in May, 1677, for misconduct and “marrying his late wife’s own sister.”

Various money differences between members are arbitrated by the Monthly Meeting, but there are no other cases of discipline. One of these arbitrations was concerned with a prominent member who had repudiated a debt. The matter was eventually referred to the Quarterly Meeting, which gave permission for the complainant to put legal proceedings on foot, “which” (the Quarterly Meeting warned the delinquent) “*may turn to thy damage and will not be of good savour to the truth.*” The result is, with most exasperating reticence, withheld.

There are at this time signs of the extensive emigration to the New World, which set in with the opening out of Pennsylvania. In November, 1681, we note a certificate drawn up for Stephen Keddy and others “removed out of this meeting and gone into Maryland,” and in May, 1682, the year when Philadelphia was founded, certificates granted to Robert Wilson and Matthew Watson with their wives and families “on their intended removal to America.” The East of

Yorkshire sent a considerable quota to Penn's new colony, and this emigration distinctly reduced the size of the meetings, an economic factor in the early decline of East Riding Quakerism not to be ignored.

There is a pathetic entry in 10th month, 1681, of money returned which had been collected for the "redemption of John Easton of Stockton from the Turks' captivity," as Easton was "not to be found." The sum was then set apart for "the redemption of Henry Strangwis from Turkish Slaverie," but two years later the money was returned again "both being dead." We may here remark that the number of Quaker prisoners in the galleys was, at one time, large enough to support a meeting in Algiers.

Scarborough seems to have been pretty regularly "run" by a little group of Friends whose names continually appear attached to the various minutes. It may be of interest to read the list rapidly through:—

Peter Hodgson, Senr., Scarborough; Peter Hodgson, Junr., Nicholas Hopperton, William Worfolke, Stainton Dale; Joseph Harwood, William Heslam, Isaac Scarth, Whitby; William Nash, James Postgate, George Allatson, Peter Garbutt, Scarborough; John Ryther, Robert Trott, Burniston, Christopher Shepheard.

An appeal for the "necessitie" of Robert Trott for his "Chamber Rent in York Castle," is found in the minutes of December, 1683, from which we learn that he suffered imprisonment about that time.

The difficulty of attending meetings in winter is shown by the minute of December, 1684, where two women Friends desiring to announce their intentions of marriage according to rule (one from Whitby and

one from Ugthorp) were unable to get to the meeting in Scarborough on account of the severe weather, but their "intentions" were kindly published in their absence.

"Intentions of marriage" are a fruitful source of information as to the local habitat of Friends. The following villages are among those named :—

Stainton Dale,	Snainton,
Burniston,	Wykeham
Hackness,	Sawdon,
Suffield,	Hutton Bushell,
Harwood Dale,	Fylingdales,
Langdale End,	Sandsend,
Ravenhill (Query "Peak ?")	Restdale,
Ruswarp,	The Marrishes,
Silpho,	Ugthorp.
Newton (upon Rockcliff).	

In the second volume, dating from 1688-1699, the minutes for the ten years which they cover show growing activity in organisation and in itinerancy. In August, 1691, four Friends are appointed (at the advice of Quarterly Meeting) "to take the Oversight of Friends of this meeting, that if need require they may deale wth such as profess the Truth and do not answer the same in spirit and conversation." Seven years later, (July, 1698) John Richardson and Isaac Scarth of Whitby, Nathaniel Bell and John Hinderwell of Stainton Dale, and James Young, James Jaquiss and John Agar of Scarborough are reported willing to take upon them the service required by Quarterly Meeting, *i.e.*, "to see that those who profess Truth do walk answerable to their profession."



“Public Friends” named as such (in other words, ministers) appear for the first time in the above Minute where a proposal is brought forward that they shall meet every quarter. In December, 1698, it was agreed that the said “Publick Friends” should meet once a quarter, “eight days before ye Quarterly Meeting at York,” on the third day of the week,—an interesting recognition of the growing needs of the fellowship.

Certain regulations as to marriage procedure are agreed upon. Women Friends found it difficult, as we have noted, to appear at two Monthly Meetings, when they had to travel from Whitby to Scarborough, or *vice versa* (especially in bad weather). This was recognised, and it was decided (Jan. 1690) that one appearance of the two parties intending marriage before “a full Monthly Meeting” should suffice, provided the intention of marriage had been previously laid before a Preparative Meeting.

In November, 1697, the Meeting desires that in future care be taken that certificates be sent from each particular Meeting to the Monthly Meetings, fully declaring the clearness and concurrence of all concerned either in regard to marriage or other affairs, and this direction is again referred to at a later date. In December, 1698, occurs the first record of Friends being appointed to inquire into the clearness of the intending parties in marriage. William Hodgson and Francis Breckon are the first named for this service.

In December, 1698, Friends are desired to be careful to register their children and to give account thereof to the Monthly Meeting. During the close of this period an outbreak of itinerancy is noticeable.



Eleven intentions to visit different parts of the country were laid before the meeting in 1698 and 1699, consent being given in all cases. The travelling ministers were Susannah Atkinson, Rachel Breckon, Mary Ellerton, George Wilson, John Agar, (who visited Holland and Friesland), Elizabeth Ward, Joseph Scarth and Elizabeth Pennitt.

No disownments are recorded, and only one case of discipline (5th mo., 1693). The marriages continue frequent, fifty-two "intentions" being laid before the meeting during the ten years.

To gather the direction of the change that was passing over the Society, we shall not require to pursue the Scarborough Minutes beyond the first two decades of the eighteenth century. In the 3rd volume, covering the period from 1700 to 1719, there is record of an increasing number of disownments—twenty in the eighteen years, against one recorded between 1669 and 1700. Cases requiring discipline became very numerous. On the other hand, there is an increase in itinerancy, especially among women Friends; no fewer than thirty-two travelling certificates being granted to women, and four to men. The same women Friends applied regularly for certificates, and one is tempted to suspect that they rather enjoyed these outings. The marriage of one [soon after her return,] with a member of a distant meeting has a suspicious appearance, which is enhanced when we consider the sad case of Elizabeth Pennitt, the servant of a certain Mary Bannister. She was one of those I named who took out certificates, but unfortunately she "ran into ungodly and vain practices, going unto

those that pretend to be fortune-tellers and following their directions and counsell, in order to accomplish what she designed, . . . which has been proved to her face." Sixteen men Friends sign the minute of disownment, which was issued in September, 1709. This tremendous punishment seems to have brought Elizabeth Pennitt to a sense of her condition, for she sends the following from Whitby Preparative Meeting eighteen months later:

"Whereas I have been drawn aside and out of the way of Truth, I am willing to condemn it all, so to own that I ought not to have been of an aspiring mind, to have known more yt. was the mind and will of God and Unconsistent with Truth, so I own it was a great Evill to ask counsell of Man or Woman to know what will befall one in this life, so I sincerely condemn it in my heart, and Truly desire that the Lord may preserve me and every one for the time to come out of the same evill, and that I may be a Warning to others that they may not be caught in the same snare.

"ELIZABETH PENNITT."

Much scandal was occasioned in 1703 by the marriage of Ellenor Hobson to an "Outsider." Her mother, a member of the meeting, made things worse by giving a supper after the wedding, at which the guests "behaved themselves very rudely by getting Fiddlers into her house and singing and dancing."

The number of marriages continues large, viz. a hundred between 1700 and 1778. The relief of the poor proceeds steadily, and the collections keep a good average, the Whitby contributions increasing towards the close.

Armed ships in the possession of Friends are cause of concern in 1706 and exercised the meeting for some

years. In 1713, Joseph Linkskill brings in a paper of condemnation against himself, for carrying guns in his ship and "using them in heat and passion to defend myself with the arms of the flesh."

In 1712, papers of denial are ordered "to be read in public first-day meeting, where the Person testified belongs to, the next first-day after the Monthly Meeting."

In 1718, 8s. 6d. is paid for "a Grose of Laces." These were bought from the Quaker prisoners in York Castle and sold among the meetings. In 1718, a collection was ordered towards building the new Meeting-house in York, and wealthy Friends were urged to be liberal "so as that ye Poor may not be overcharged." £143 1s. was brought in, Whitby contributing £79 10s. Scarborough £58 1s., and Stainton Dale £5 10s.

This dry chronological analysis requires the eye of historical imagination for its proper interpretation. There is much we are not told. The quaint, formal minutes scarcely clothe the bones of Peter Hodgson with living flesh. Yet these were men of like nature with ourselves, knowing joy and sorrow, trial and temptation. Robert Trott of Burniston suffers for truth in York Castle, Joseph Linkskill yields to heat and passion in his reliance upon "the arms of the flesh." Elizabeth Pennitt, the serving-maid, gads foolishly after charlatans that she may see less darkly in the glass of fate than the apostle Paul; while two poor fellows wear out existence in the cruel galleys, longing with faint hearts for home, and the good smell of the peat-smoke curling from some familiar chimney in a Yorkshire dale.

And all this while modern England is making. James II. scurries in disgrace from the people he betrayed. The Toleration Act relieves the terrible pressure of persecution, and the golden age of Anne, the age of polished letters, of Addison and Steele, of Pope and Swift, is ushered in. Little enough do the simple folk of Stainton Dale know or care of high politics,—the march of Marlborough's armies across a continent, the intrigues, the cabals of the men of affairs. For what, indeed, are they, these people of whom we read, these local Quakers busy in this quiet corner of England, building their little church, riding upon ponies by the rough coast tracks, through blinding sleet or hot sunshine, from Whitby, Scarborough, Silpho, Hackness, Harwood Dale and Langdale End to their Monthly Meeting at Stainton Dale? They were people of no great station. Where the chronicler, by an accident, has vouchsafed information, I have noted their occupation in life, and this is the list I get :

House Carpenter, Yeoman (or Farmer), Constable, Cordwainer, Seaman, Compass-maker, Mariner, Weaver, Master Mariner, or Shipowner, and Shopkeeper.

No fear of "humane learning," of Rabbinical subtleties, here! They were men, indeed, of practical gift, of homely spirit, but of small book-knowledge, who with all their human failings, kept the way open for us to-day.

Time does not permit us to examine in like detail the other local Monthly Meeting Books, but a few gleanings from their pages may help us to fill out the picture and lead us towards our conclusion.



We will turn first to those of Malton, which only date from 1694. After 1696, Monthly Meetings were held in rotation at Pickering, Malton and Thornton in the Clay, the first Monthly Meeting at Pickering falling in July, 1696. In March, 1699, Overseers are appointed, as such, for Malton, Pickering and Barton Meetings, two men and two women Friends for each, with the following advice :

“ Those Friends above named and chosen by this meeting (*i.e.*, Monthly Meeting at Malton) are not only to be examples to the flock and church of Christ over which the Church and Holy Ghost hath maid them overseers, marked patterns in patience, love, virtue, humility, godliness ; and that faithfully discharge themselves in that trust reposed in them, namely, to inspect into the lives and conversations, habits and furniture in Friends' houses, that all things be kept as become our holy profession and that weighty testimony unto which we are called. The men taking care to inspect into things chiefly belonging to ye men and ye women to things chiefly belonging to ye women, yet the one helping the other as need requires, and that they give an account to this Monthly Meeting of their proceedings.”

On the 13th of November, 1699, George Mennell is appointed M.M. scribe at 12s. per year. Whether on the strength of this magnificent salary or not I cannot say, but in 1701 he ventures to marry. In 1702, however, occurs a minute recording his discharge “ nott for any occasion given or mysdemeanour committed butt because it is thought that the charge was unnecessary.” Perhaps Mennell knew his Monthly Meeting, and married money !

In 1700 Friends are recommended to moderation at burials, and in 1701 a lengthy minute on the subject



of marrying out, a prominent concern in all the books of the period, announces that "ye Spirit of ye Lord in his servants had advised to ye contrary and withstood and reproved ye persons concerned in these kind of marriages." The minute appeals for faithful dealing in such matters, and where entanglement of the affections with the World's people is suspected, Friends are exhorted "to stand up in God's authority, and in the meek, lamb-like spirit speak to the person and advise to the contrary," and if this "meek, lamb-like spirit" has no effect—why then the Monthly Meeting must resort to the carnal expedient of discipline.

Scattered through the books are many minutes concerning Friends' burial ground at Rillington, at Leavening, Strensall and Barton i' the Willows. In 1706, at Monthly Meeting held in June, in Thornton in the Clay, we read that William Allen published his intention of marriage with Mary Pilmore last month, but is reported as "not clear from Dorothy Pate," so permission to marry Mary Pilmore is refused. Similar minutes are not so infrequent as might be wished, and reflect not a little upon the gallantry of young men Friends!

In 1718, Malton Meeting, for the first time, heads the list in the collections to be sent up to Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting, displacing Pickering from the premier position it had hitherto held. In 1735, the following is added to the 8th Query:—"How are the poor Friends taken care of, and what care is taken of the education of their offspring?"

In September, 1736, William Cook is spoken to respecting his "keeping company by way of court-

shippe in order to marry with a woman of another persuasion." Next month, having failed to put in an appearance, William Cook "desires Friends to have patience with him because he could not well leave his scholars two days together," and is ordered to come to a future meeting. In November he appeared, "and signified his dissatisfaction at being entangled with a woman of another persuasion, and gives some expectation of delivering keeping her company, therefore Friends are willing to show more lenaty (*sic*) and Forbearance," but in the following year we learn that the young lady conquered, and William Cook, in spite of the "lenaty" of the Children of the Light, was disowned. Our sympathy is with the couple.

There are various minutes of interest that cannot be detailed. Of sufferings and imprisonments for tithes, and of exhortation to be faithful in resisting them, we find records everywhere. Nor need we wonder. Luke Howard has calculated that from the seventeenth century down to 1830, property to the value of £1,125,000 was distrained from the Quakers for ecclesiastical purposes.

Of Kirby Moorside, I regret to report, the less said the better. I have gone through the Preparative Meeting books and they are a melancholy record of petty quarrels and the poisonous influence of perpetual gossip, that really terrible curse of little towns.

Turning to the Guisboro' books we must again set aside for want of time much that is of interest, both humorous and grave. As illustrating the quaint details of poor relief I select a minute of 9th mo., 1753 :

“ John Martin is ordered to buy Agnes Kidd an under waistcoat and bring to our next an acct. of ye charges.”

Elsewhere the following minute of the Quarterly Meeting of 1737 is inserted :—

“ Are they (*i.e.*, the ministers) free from being troublesome and uneasy to meetings by too long and tedious testimonies when life doth not attend them, and do they give way to strangers ”—

which last injunction, though not undesirable, savours somewhat of human arrangement.

Going back to an earlier time, we note among the deeds of the Meeting, now at Great Ayton, an interesting document,—a conveyance of the Burial Ground at Danby, dated 1658, which contains what is in effect, a declaration of faith. After a legal preamble the deed states that the Burial Ground is for the

“ onely and proper use and behoof of the People of God who are gathered in the light and Spirit of Jesus Christ off from the outward Temple made with hands in the time of Apostacy (which ignorantly is called a Church) and from the will-worship and superstition that attends it, to the Church in God, I. Thess. ii., of which Christ Jesus is declared to be the Head, Ephes. i. 22, Ephes. v. 27, Col. i. 18. And to worship God the Father in spirit and in truth, according to ye Scriptures, John iv. 23, 24, Phil. iii. 3, who are the true worshippers of God as aforesaid though of the world they are reproachfully called Quakers, to and for their onely and proper use and service to meet together in and bury their dead at all time and times (as their freedom and occasion shall be) from henceforth and for ever. And also to and for the same uses and service of all such as shall in the same Light, Spirit and order for ever hereafter succeed them in Danby aforesaid and any other adjacent

Dales, Townes, Villages or places thereabouts where any are so gathered, or shall at any time or times hereafter be gathered in the Light, Spirit and Order of the Church the people of God aforsaid,"—

continuing as it began like an ordinary legal document.

This declaration, which I have noted in two other deeds, *e.g.*, in a conveyance of land at Bagdale, Whitby, also for a burial ground, dated 1659, was evidently an accepted formula at that time.

Having entered by chance upon lawyers' preserves, this may be a suitable occasion for quoting an interesting document which would seem to bear on the derivation of the term *Friends*. A conveyance of land for Whitby Meeting House, January 30th, 1669, for £36 by Isabel Sutton, widow, to Thomas Linskill and Isaac Hayes, marriners of Whitby, and William Letherington of Whitby, Merchant, departs from common usage in speaking not "of the people of God, in scorn called Quakers," but of Friends, even using the latter term without the customary addition "of Truth." The purchase-money is paid "on the behalf of all the rest of ffrriends in the truth (as it is in Jesus) in gennerall in the towne of Whitby aforesaid and elsewhere."

"And whereas a meeting house for Friends of truth in gennerall is intended to be erected and builded upon the said parcel of ground or garden plott it is hereby fully agreed to by and between the above-named fflower ffrriends on the behalfe and with the consent of the rest of ffrriends in gennerall, etc., as to leaving a passage way for Isabel Sutton and her heirs to have free access for themselves and tenants and others so long and no longer than she and they live in the blessed Truth which wee the said fflower



ffriends and the rest of ffriends to truth in gennerall do prophess and practice.”

And now in conclusion it may be asked, to what do all these extracts tend ?

We set ourselves three questions :—

1st.—What were the immediate outward fruits of local Apostolic Quakerism ?

2nd.—What was the inner life of the early fellowship ?

There remains the third :—What was the subsequent development ?

Reviewing the mass of material collected during the preparation of these lectures, I confess that the picture which rises to my mind is sad and gloomy. It is not possible to whitewash eighteenth century Quakerism. It had its elements of beauty and strength. John Woolman, who died in York in 1772, is still a fragrant memory, and in the York Retreat for the Insane, founded in 1796, and the establishment of Ackworth School in 1779, the names of Tuke and Fothergill are justly honoured to this day. Nor must we forget, if we recall no others, men like David Hall and John Richardson, or even the quaint Luke Cock, whose oddities are remembered perhaps at the expense of his virtues. But in the main, the middle period of Quakerism is one of rapid decay. Some months ago, looking over the Kendal Quarterly Meeting minutes, I deciphered the following query, now almost illegible :—

“ Whether Friends keep up their week-day meetings, observing the hour appointed, and how preserved out of dulness and sleepiness when met, and how such as sit



next them that be overcome by sleepiness do discharge their brotherly duty by stirring them up."

The humour of this minute is perhaps more apparent to us than to those who wrote it, and yet when we have laughed our laugh, there is something pathetic behind it. It is the creeping of the shadow of eclipse over the glory of sacrifice and devoted zeal which marked the rise of Quakerism. Zeal there was even when Friends slept as they did habitually in the afternoon meeting, but how was it directed ?

In 1712 the Women's Meeting at York issued the following minute :—

"We desire an alteration in these things . . . as follows, viz., Friends gowns made indecently, one part over Long and ye other too short, with Lead in ye sleeves and that Friends should come to a stability and be satisfied in the shape and compass yt. Truth leads into without changing as ye World changes, also black or Coloured Silk or Musling Aprons, as likewise Hoods or Scarves not too long or broad, and we desire yt. Friends keep clear of putting on their Handkerchiefs according to ye fashions of ye World leaving their neck bare behind and also that Friends clothe may be a dark modest colour and not have ye Hair Cut or powdered, neither Quoifs to be made with gathers on ye Forehead bordering on ye Fashion of ye world, these things Friends Judgment is gone out against."

Signed by Mary White, etc.

Yes ! These things Friends' judgment is gone out against, and increasingly do the minutiae of conduct exercise the godly.

But in the weightier matters of the law, the creation of a spiritual atmosphere in which mind and heart

may be enlarged in the strength of all-embracing Truth, Friends were sadly deficient.

I have foreborn to give you the analysis of the disownments. It is a melancholy record. Apart from the suicidal madness of casting out Friends for marrying outsiders, which came near to extinguishing the Society, there is continued and painful testimony to widespread immorality and drunkenness. In 1761 a great visitation set on foot by the Yearly Meeting, ushered in an era of disciplinary reform. That reform was needed, no one who has read John Griffith's Journal, or the reports sent in by the Visiting Committees, can for a moment doubt. The spiritual state of the Yearly Meeting was exceedingly low. But the [reformation lacked what it needed most, the spiritual temper of the early days. It set up a rigid type to which all must conform, it fastened upon Friends the narrowing distinction of external peculiarities, and raised about the fellowship that Chinese wall which, with great labour, we have just beaten down. Not till the middle of the nineteenth century was the decrease in numbers checked, and then the wide liberation of spiritual energy at home and abroad, in the Foreign Missions and the Adult Schools, brought with it a quickening of life.

We can afford to study the history of the great decline and to take its lessons to heart, because we have hope in the future and faith in the great renewal.

## THE RISE OF QUAKERISM IN YORKSHIRE.

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### LECTURE III.

YESTERDAY we considered the immediate outward fruits of local Apostolic Quakerism, the inner life of the early fellowship, and its development during the eighteenth century ; to-day we are concerned with the bearing of past experience upon the present and the future. Certain practical considerations will come before us, and as I am anxious that there should be an opportunity for discussion, my paper shall be brief.

What are the broad facts which emerge after studying the local details of Quaker history ?

The invincible spirit and stubborn conscience of the early Friends brought upon them much cruel suffering which they bore for the most part without murmur or complaint. *Their life was in the open.* No religious fellowship was more exposed to the view and the criticism of the world. It was impossible to ignore the Quaker because he would not be ignored. If you close his meeting-house, he holds it in the street ; if you beat him, he blesses you ; if you stone him out of the city in the evening, he is there in the morning preaching, with his bleeding wounds still fresh upon him. Let, however, a magistrate be unjust, and there is launched upon him all the thunder and lightning

of the Hebrew Prophets ; neither king nor protector, bishop nor pope, are spared. " Thus saith the Lord ! " and so the Quaker stands, the messenger of Divine wrath, of Divine love ; you may break the earthen vessel, but the spirit is invincible, and that you cannot kill.

Turn to the eighteenth century, the life that was in the open is in secret. Timidly the Quaker peeps over his hedge of prickly cactus, willing that his plain coat of sleek broadcloth should testify for simplicity, but loath indeed to take it off, like the Methodist, and preach to a storming crowd at the street corner. He is careful to avoid debts and financial disgrace, ponderous in the sobriety of his language and the dulness of his intellect. His culture is narrow, his outlook small ; his dinners are good, and his worship somnolent. Do not think that I am unjust. This is literally true ; the picture of a common type. We are too prone to judge the majority from the exceptions and to forget, in the glamour of great names and noble lives, the spiritual torpor which spread over the rank and file. Were it otherwise there had been no decay. Saints there were, of a rare quality, bred in the calm of a cloistral life, whose sweet placidity of temper and unobtrusive charities were a holy and redeeming influence, preserving the honour of the Quaker name ; but beyond this was a dead conformity to an outward pattern, the spirit of the Jew who had Abraham for his father, of the Pharisee who thanked God that he was not as the publican.

Popular history lights up the mountain-tops and leaves the valleys in shadow. But it is a false topo-



graphy that describes the middle region of Quakerism as a range of lofty peaks. The majority, always unrecorded in history, lived on the plain. Listen to the following extract from John Griffith's Journal :—

“ On the 3rd of 6th mo. (1761) we visited Richmond Monthly Meeting held at Aisgarth ; the number of members here was very considerable, yet the life of religion seemed at a low ebb. That sorrowful mistake of imagining themselves God's people without the real sense of the indwelling of His holy Spirit . . . has I fear very much prevailed upon the posterity of the faithful worthies who are gone to their rest.”

At Thirsk on the 5th,

“ there is great lukewarmness, an earthly, carnal spirit having much the ascendancy in parents, and rawness, insensibility and a deviation from plainness in divers of the youth.” On the 8th at Guisborough Monthly Meeting held at Kirby Moorside, there is a “ truly concerned remnant.” “ But at this, as well as at other places, we had with sorrow of heart to view the great desolation that an enemy had made in time of outward ease and liberty. He could not prevail upon our worthy predecessors, by depriving them of their liberty in jails and stinking dungeons. . . . Nay! the loss of all their outward substance and the lives of many could not deter them from maintaining their testimony for God . . . ; yet he hath mightily prevailed on many of their inconsiderate offspring, who seem to have very little besides the husk left to feed upon.”

What caused this change? Undoubtedly the Quaker fellowship shared in the general reaction which affected all denominations and continued until the fervid preaching of John Wesley and George Whitefield once more stirred the cold embers of religion into flame. When in 1689 the Toleration Act was passed,



the Quakers, like a rowing crew after a fierce race, rested on their oars.

There are early evidences, going back indeed to the time of Fox's death, of coming change. Advice is given to guard Quaker children from contact with those of the world's people, and that Friends do not mingle in politics,—Stephen Crisp, for instance, urges on Friends the avoidance of the terms "Jemmites and Billites," current at the time of James' flight and William's accession. The tendencies thus illustrated were emphasised by the political and educational disabilities imposed upon Friends in common with other Nonconformists. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts did not take place till 1828, Friends were not admitted to Parliament till 1833, while the religious tests continued in force at Oxford and Cambridge till 1854-6.

The true spirit of Quakerism found vent at last in practical philanthropy, as the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and the labours of Elizabeth Fry in Newgate Jail remind us. But it was inevitable that the broad effect of an early tendency to withdraw into social and religious seclusion, enhanced by the external conditions already particularised, was steadily to contract the range of activity and to narrow the outlook upon life. Thrown back upon themselves, with no serious work before them, limited in the range of their education, the mint, anise and cummin of dress and forms of speech, all the little external differences which grew finally into a Quaker ritualism, swelled to the importance of first principles, and disturbed the true balance in matters spiritual. A weight of

dead, traditional forms crushed the old free life of the spirit, and really hastened the decline it was intended to arrest.

Friends travelling in the ministry are numerous in the middle period, but as distinguished from the labours of the first generation, they move, with few exceptions, unknown to the world, and entirely within the limits of the fellowship. Moreover, the great stream of broadsheets, pamphlets and books, intended for a general public, shrinks to a trickling rivulet, if it does not dry up altogether, and with the close of the Keithian controversy, or before the accession of Queen Anne, all development of distinctive Quaker thought upon the fundamentals of belief, appears suddenly to cease. After Barclay, there is no serious attempt at the exposition of Quakerism until we come to Joseph John Gurney. Even to-day we are in this position, that a view of Gospel truth, remarkable in its fitness to meet modern needs, is without any adequate modern interpretation in an accessible form. This is really a fact of considerable significance, and is not unconnected with the excessive fear of "humane learning" which, at first a natural reaction from rabbinical sermonising, became in the end a mere ignorant prejudice and worked incalculable mischief throughout the Society. A perusal of eighteenth century minutes will pretty certainly reveal an indifference to education which, in fact, existed to such an extent that it converted the task of founding Ackworth School into a work of reformation.

Behind this prejudice there lay a deep-seated indolence, a refusal, whether wilful or not, to recognise

what was involved, in all its practical meaning, by the responsibility of the Free Ministry. That which was moved by the Spirit could entail no labour of the intellect, and so far was the doctrine pressed that it made the ministry appear almost independent of human responsibility.

The late J. C. Atkinson, in his "Forty Years in a Moorland Parish," tells a story of old William Hartas at a "burial" in Danby Dale. "It was customary," writes the author, "for William to say a few words before the burial party separated. On this occasion nothing had been said. The company, expecting him to speak, waited in silence." Nor were they disappointed. "After looking long and fixedly into the grave in still silence, he gave utterance at length to the following speech: 'Our fr'ind seems vara comfortable,' and turning to the sexton, 'Thou mun hap him oop.' This concluded the 'burial service' on that occasion." I do not tell the story as any reproach against the dear old Friend whose speech will provoke a smile so long as the "Moorland Parish" finds a reader; I seek rather by this humorous tale to fix in your mind the true weakness of the Quaker position. The ministry which swept England in the days of Fox, was impotent in after years to hold the congregations together, and many a closed meeting-house and deserted dale tells the sad story of its failure.

We have come now to the final chapter of our three-volume novel, and the issue of the plot can no longer be withheld. I would close with the practical consideration of the Free Ministry, for here is the issue that must determine the future of the Society.

And although I acknowledge at once that the problem of the ministry is really a question of spiritual temper and outlook, yet I must insist that it has certain aspects until recently neglected, calling for separate attention. Spiritual temper, though vital, is not in itself the whole matter. It is possible to imagine a congregation where the spiritual condition is individually healthy, and yet where the ministry of the word is weak, where in the important sphere of practical service love has free play, but where consecrated intellectual guidance is wanting. Unintelligent social work, for example, may spring from the prompting of a warm good heart, but it will be less efficient where it is not supplemented by a clear cool head. These are the human conditions never absent in the service of God, and however much we may insist upon immediate guidance, God never allows us to transfer to Him our share of the work to which He has called us.

We have seen the paralysing effect of a narrow, formal discipline in the eighteenth century, and in the inevitable reaction, we are perhaps inclined to opposite extremes, accepting, somewhat light-heartedly, the dictum that every man shall do what he thinks right in his own eyes. Freedom for the individual, however, must always have regard to his relation with the fellowship. We are not detached units, but members of one body. Do not let us forget the strenuous efforts made by George Fox to set up and establish a discipline in the church. We have seen how early the need for organised effort was felt, that as early as 1654, sixty-three ministers, with their



head-quarters at Swarthmore, and undoubtedly under central control, were travelling the country upon "Truth's ponies." Fox did not confound spiritual government with administrative chaos. He made a sane man's use of the faculties which God had given him in common with the human race. It was the absence of this sanity in the matter of the ministry, a narrow rather than a broad interpretation of the meaning of inspiration, coupled with a mistaken and restrictive idea of the purposes of discipline, that marks the eighteenth century.

I am not sure that we have thoroughly learned the elementary lesson which our history teaches even yet.

A few thoughts, then, about the dreaded word *organisation*. I take it at this point because I recognise its subsidiary, though essential, importance, and because I wish to end upon a different note.

Why is it—I put the question pointedly—why is it that our young men can throw their energy into the Adult Schools, organise, prepare, arrange, teach, gather companies about them, and when it becomes a question of work in the direct line of Quaker teaching, work for and in the meeting, that they hesitate and fall away? I am no pessimist, but can anyone face the facts as they are and regard the comparative absence of young people coming forward in the ministry without misgiving? It is a grave symptom, and, disregarded, it will have grave consequences.

Suppose to-morrow we could enlist all this energy at present absorbed in the Adult Schools, in the expansion of the Quaker fellowship. Suppose a com-



bination between our unsectarian Adult School class and a Meeting for Worship, the latter at a different hour ; suppose it the work of our young men in the towns and villages of Yorkshire, not made to conform to a rigid pattern, but conducted with perfect freedom and elasticity. Suppose the Quaker fellowship animated by the same fervour and hope which marks the faith of our workers in the Adult School movement, the same belief in the cause. There is latent energy to-day which, rightly called out, consecrated, directed and equipped, could in a generation change the whole aspect of the situation, and pave the way to a development of unknown extent and possibilities.

By the side of the Quaker maps I have hung a map, showing the extent of Wesleyanism in the *North* and *East* Ridings. It represents in geographical form, 882 chapels with a membership of 38,604, and an attendance of about 150,000. Wesley stepped in and occupied what the followers of Fox had been unable to retain. We may be thankful that he did so. The debt England owes to Methodism, especially in the country districts, will never be known, but do not let us assume that therefore the spiritual wants of the people are met, that there is no virgin soil to till. It is not true—still the hungry sheep look up and are not fed.

Can nothing, then, be done to satisfy their hunger ?

We are concerned with organisation ; let me suggest what organisation can do. It can provide for our gathering, a hundred strong, at the Toll Booth in Kirby Moorside, it can repeat the gathering next year at Scalby, and every year at some suitable point

within the "compass of ours." The early general meetings of the Society were attended by thousands, wooden booths were erected to accommodate the throngs. We, too, may have our general meetings and not merely for the transaction of business. Next year, for example, the Spring Quarterly Meeting is probably to meet at Scarborough. We hope for a week-end visit. Let this be a hint. Let the Summer Quarterly Meeting in 1906 and afterwards be held on the lines of a Summer School, compressing the business and devoting a day or two to meetings for spiritual deepening held with the public, for conferences like the great liberating conference at Manchester, not always in the same place, but wherever the need is great or opportunity offers. Again, we may extend the excellent organisation by which our local interchange of visits are provided, in order that, like Thomas Thompson, our ministers may go where there are no Friends, and hold public meetings with the world's people. We may appoint and support an organising secretary (a modern counterpart of George Mennell at 12s. a year)—let him have a useful lending library at his disposal, provide courses of lectures and lecturers—an active propaganda, concerned not only with established congregations, but with the building up of new ones. We may call in other Monthly Meetings to combine in the work, and as we take the field, transform our meetings on Ministry and Oversight into missionary conferences.

But we have not the time; look at so and so, and so and so, head over ears in work, a whole meeting, an Adult School, half a political constituency, and a

local council, upon his shoulders. I query whether in the time of Fox better work was done than some are doing to-day. There are those here, doubtless, no less faithful than John Whitehead, who would have suffered under the persecution of the Conventicle Act as cheerfully as he.

But listen to this :—Four young men recently came to a large meeting in the South, at different times. In each case, Friends wrote letters of introduction, asking the members of this meeting to get the young men interested in the Adult School. There was in no case a hint that they should be interested in the meeting. This is not want of time, but of imagination. Those who, in the spirit of self-sacrifice, are taking the full burden, need relief, not further stimulation to service, but there are those who have not taken on harness, and among younger workers there is need for a wise direction and division of energy. For example, the changed conditions of modern life demand an equipment, mental as well as spiritual, if they are to be adequately met. We cannot afford to belittle “humane learning”; the difficulties of Biblical interpretation, the profound questions which gather round the fundamentals of belief, cannot lightly be set aside, nor can they be dealt with by untrained minds. The service here is large, and because it has been neglected, the need is pressing. It will not be every one’s service, for as there is infinite diversity in gifts, so there is infinite diversity in needs. But for those who feel the call to labour in this province, a severe mental discipline, a wise economy of time, a proper choice of reading, and definite studies methodi-

cally pursued, will be necessary. Woodbrooke will gladly open its doors to assist them, and I wish that our young men of energy would consent to regard such apparent withdrawal from active service, from work on committees and where the results are immediate and tangible, as no less needful and practical, destined to be no less fruitful in blessing to the church.

But it is idle to talk of these things unless the message is clear, and unless the messenger knows the imposition of the crucified hands. If organisation is necessary, it is subsidiary. The Spirit is over all.

And here difficulties present themselves. There is the statement:—

(1) That Quakerism (I wish someone would hit on a better word) is absorbed in the other churches, and that there is no call for a distinctive message, and

(2) That Quakerism is unsuited to the masses.

As to the second, I believe it to be absolutely false. Fox did not think so, even when he sat on the hay-stack and famished the people from words; John Whitehead did not think so, when he preached in the barn at Hunmanby; not one of the sixty-three preachers who rode out of Swarthmore ever thought so. No. Thomas Hancock in his "Peculium" put his finger on a weak spot when he wrote in 1858, "In 1658 there was not a Quaker living who did not believe Quakerism to be the one only true church of God. In 1858 there is not a Quaker living who does believe it."

We need not make the first claim in rejecting the second. There is a mean between the affirmation



and its negative which is possible and legitimate. Thomas Hancock is right—*we don't believe* in Quakerism. That is the trouble. We are Friends for a hundred reasons but the right one. If it were not so the first proposition, that Quakerism is absorbed in the other churches, would never be made; never, because it simply is not true.

Please understand me. When I speak of Quakerism, I am speaking, not of the visible body of Friends as they are to-day. That would scarcely arouse enthusiasm. We compromise too much, accomplish too little—there are too many dead branches in our little tree. I am speaking of a way of looking at life, of the ideal of what would be if the Quaker view of the Gospel, the spiritual, inward view, were realised and understood not only by the world's people, but by the Children of the Light. For it is the Children of the Light who do not understand. There is something that has not broken in the heart, some blindness that has not fallen from the eyes. We look too low, we love too little. We are afraid to trust the hidden power of God. Quakerism absorbed? In Fox's day the gloom of predestination, the awful terrors of hell, hung over the trembling, and darkened their days. Bunyan fled from the Church steeple for fear the bells should fall, and crush him in his sins; Stephen Crisp at nine or ten years old sought God with "strong cries and tears," and, imbued with the stern spirit of an austere religion, was led at twelve years of age to contemplate the doctrine of election! He writes: "In this iron furnace I toiled and laboured and none knew my sorrows and griefs."



It is different now, the terrors of hell are no more. Nay, eternity itself is forgotten. Men live from day to day feeding their souls on the spiced fare of an ephemeral press, with their eye on the price list or the market, and yielding their bodies such self-indulgence as their means afford.

Quakerism absorbed? How much of public worship is real? How much a convention demanded by society as the sign-manual of respectability? How many who name the name of Christ know him in their hearts? How many suffer with him for the cruelty, the wars, the poverty, the vice, the shame, the sin, that still shuts against us the doors of Paradise? How many love their neighbour as themselves? No! Quakerism is not absorbed. There is room yet for the teaching of the Inward Light, for the witness of a living God, for a reinterpretation of the Christ in lives that shall convict the careless, language that shall convince the doubting. The dust of a busy commerce hides the Cross. The Christ of the people is but a lay figure draped in a many coloured garment of creeds, and, worshipping the counterfeit of its own creation, the world sins on.

There is room yet for a fellowship, all-inclusive in its tender sympathy, drawn close in the loving bondage of sincerity and truth, for a noble simplicity of life and manners, rich in true culture and the taste born of knowledge; for a freedom that scorns the flummeries of rank, the perquisites of pride, because it knows the worth of manhood and loves the privilege of friendship; for a simple worship, homely and informal because intimate and real.

Climb Pendle Hill with Fox and see once more his vision—"a great people to be gathered," enter in spirit the dungeons of the past and learn why they were palaces, and the bolts precious jewels, repeat again with Nayler his tender words, and in the spirit of his message face the future that lies before you. "Its crown is meekness, its life is everlasting love unfeigned, it takes its kingdom with entreaty and not with contention and keeps it by lowliness of mind."\*

\* See "The Spirit of 17th Century Quakerism." Appendix III.

## THE BASIS OF THE QUAKER FAITH.

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The historic sketches already given may be fittingly followed by two addresses setting forth the Lecturer's view of "the basis of the Quaker faith."

The first deals especially with Worship, and includes several passages from his articles in "Present Day Papers" on this subject. John Wilhelm Rowntree puts "the golden thread of worship" in the foreground both in these papers, and in the last series he wrote, on the yet wider theme of "Man's relation to God" as it had become real to him in his experience. "Jesus," he says, "points to the heart of a man as the true seat of worship and sacrifice." "To be a Christian is indeed to be hid with Christ in God." It is in this teaching that "the basis of the Quaker faith as discovered in the Gospels must be found."

The second lecture applies the same root thought to the sacraments, the ministry, and church fellowship.

The addresses were written for some of the evening meetings of Friends where arrangements are now made for definite Christian teaching, in the winter of 1902-3.



## THE BASIS OF THE QUAKER FAITH. I.

Read John xvii.

**F**ROM the year 20 B.C. until about ten years before the fall of Jerusalem, the great Temple of the Herods was building.

Throughout the life-time of Jesus Christ, the workmen were busy with hammer, saw and chisel, upon the house of the national God. And how great a work it was. Professor Delitzsch tells us that more than 18,000 workmen were employed upon it. He says, (I quote from the translation):

“The work was contracted for by the cubit and finished according to a somewhat larger scale of cubit, so as to avoid the least appearance of peculation in sacred matters. The workmen did not suffer by this arrangement, for their wages were high. They were paid not weekly but daily, and those only working one hour a day received their wages at once. Those employed were not only architects, stonecutters, masons and carpenters. The wall which surrounded both the forecourts of the Temple was forty cubits high, and contained nine lofty portals, eight of which were furnished with gilded or silvered folding doors, while the one towards the east had folding doors of Corinthian bronze still more richly decorated. This was called the Nikanorgate or Beautiful Gate.

“Inside, the Temple was richly ornamented with gold and silver, both in its hangings and its massive goldsmiths’ work. The whole of the Temple itself shone with the fiery glow of the plates of gold inlaying the walls on all sides,



or, where it was not gilded, with the dazzling white of its spotless marble ; the roof was covered with a gold interlacing . . . to keep away the birds."

And so we might go on, adding detail after detail of costly magnificence. It is not only a poet's fancy when Stephen Phillips exclaims in the person of his musing Herod :—

" I dreamed last night of a dome of beaten gold  
To be a counter glory to the sun :  
There shall the eagle blindly dash himself,  
There the first beam shall strike, and there the moon  
Shall aim all night her argent archery ;  
And it shall be the tryst of sundered stars,  
The haunt of dread and dreaming Solomon ;  
Shall send a light upon the lost in Hell,  
And flashings upon faces without hope—  
And I will think in gold, and dream in silver,  
Imagine in marble, and in bronze conceive,  
Till it shall dazzle pilgrim nations,  
And stammering tribes from undiscovered lands,  
Allure the living God out of the bliss,  
And all the streaming seraphim from heaven."

Against this gorgeous background let us see the scene at the well of Sychar. The stillness of the mid-day heat ; the distant glimmer of white buildings buried in the green figs and olives ; the mountain pass parting Gerizim from the swelling shoulder of Mount Ebal ; the broken, dusty road from Jerusalem to Samaria ; the tired traveller sitting by the well ; the woman, with the stately walk of the Oriental, coming down from the scattered cottages of suburban Sychar ; the conversation ; the drawing of the water—the scene is so simple and so natural that the passer-by

would hardly turn his head, unless, indeed, he recognised the traveller as a Jew, and wondered for a moment how a Jew could be in public converse with a Samaritan woman. The chance meeting is the merest incident in the day's travel, and yet how great is the outcome.

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life."

"Sir," exclaims the woman, "I perceive that thou art a prophet;" and pointing up at Mount Gerizim, she challenges him, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; you, a Jew, say that it is in Jerusalem men ought to worship."

"Woman, believe me, neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father. The hour cometh, and now is, when true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for such does the Father seek to be his worshippers. God is spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Our quest is the source of Quakerism in the Gospels. And by Sychar's spring we approach more nearly to what we seek, than we shall ever do in the gorgeous temple of the Herods.

Let us examine this well-side teaching in view of the thought and practice of the times in which Jesus lived. Let us see, as we appreciate the atmosphere in which he moved, what was its full significance. But to do so we must for a moment glance back at times that were long before Christ, for through all the story of the human race, runs the golden thread

of worship. Even the rudest savage has his sense of a higher power. His vision is distorted, his faith little more than fear, his expression of the vague sentiment in his breast is barbarous; but cruel or grotesque as the religions of man's spiritual infancy may now appear, they were the first stage in the slow evolution of worship from the dread of the strong to the adoration of the righteous. The story is of surpassing interest; for it tells not merely of man groping after God, but of the Father seeking His children.

The development is not indeed without interruption. Again and again there is stumbling on the altar stairs. We see simple faiths elaborated, and overlaid with ceremonial, until their life departs and the gaudy vestment alone is left. It was thus in Egypt. There, as elsewhere, the earliest religious ideas were probably expressed in Nature-worship; the vague, undetermined stage of spiritual life. Imagination, uncontrolled by reason, would develop the dæmonistic, magical rites observable to-day among the lowest African tribes. Each village, or group of villages, had its fetish or totem, its sacred cat, or hawk, or cow, and so the rabble of the Egyptian gods came into being. As the sense of national unity grew strong under the rule of the Pharaohs, so also the different local religious ideas underwent some sort of fusion resulting in a national mythology, in which the local gods were brought under the dominance of Amen-Ra at Karnak. Then follows the decadence!

Probably neither the Eastern nor the Western church ever surpassed in splendour the service in the

temple of the Father of Gods. No religious procession winding through the streets of Rome or Constantinople was ever more gorgeous than that which passed down the avenue of Sphinxes to the Nile, when the god in his golden bark was borne aloft by shaven priests in white garments, accompanied by every accessory of magnificence ; by dancing priestesses and musicians with their clashing instruments, by waving fans and clouds of incense. But there was little in which the common people might take part. The ancient totem of the village had become a mystery, hidden in the inner sanctuary from the eyes of the vulgar ; the service of the god was now the exclusive privilege of a class. Little wonder then that while the priests might cherish a mystic interpretation of the symbols of their worship, refining the grossness of an earlier age, the people ceased to believe in a ceremonial which for them had lost its meaning, and in which they hardly shared. This tendency to elaborate worship, and to create a separate class charged with the function of the temple, is almost universal. Living symbols become outworn, and obscure what once they revealed, until the spirit of religion fails under a dead weight of perfunctory rites.

Of such symbols propitiatory sacrifice was perhaps the most significant. The chief deity was regarded as a king, the local gods as lords and ladies, and divine favour might only be obtained by presents. Homer declares that the gods are persuaded by gifts, while in Exodus xxiii. 15, we read that Jahveh must not be approached empty-handed.

In process of time these crude ideas lost their



meaning for the worshipper, and sacrifice became a dead convention. But the Hebrew prophets hurled their denunciation against all sacrificial ceremonial, even when its meaning was still evident.\* They grasped the truth that worship is inward and spiritual, the reverence of the soul for a righteous God. Ceremonial acts apart from moral conduct had for them no value whatever. They had a vision of that Christian ideal to which Paul gave noble utterance when he called upon men, by the mercies of God, to present to Him their bodies a living and acceptable sacrifice.†

But, in spite of the prophets, the deep spirituality welling up in some post-exilic psalms‡ seems but a slender stream by the swollen river of legalism. On its return from Babylon the Jewish community had been reorganised by the priests, who combining the sacerdotal and the legal, ruled henceforward over both the spiritual and material affairs of the people ; and when in course of time their laxity provoked the rise of the Scribes, these authoritative interpreters only brought the Law into even greater prominence. In the days of Christ the Jewish nation had become a people of the Law, which commanded its enthusiastic obedience by the promise of future glory through faith in divine retribution. This faith in divine

\* Amos protests in vigorous language : " Though ye offer me your burnt offerings and meal offerings I will not accept them ; neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts." See also Isaiah i. 10-17, and Micah vi. 6-8.

† It may be interesting here to recall a quotation of Porphyry from an earlier Greek writer : " We ought then having been united and made like to God to offer our own conduct as a holy sacrifice to him, the same being also a hymn and our salvation in passionless excellence of soul."

‡ e.g. Psalm cxxxix.



retribution was, says Schürer, "a mainspring of all zeal for the Law. Nay, the entire religious life of the Jewish people during this period, revolved round these two poles:—Fulfilment of the Law and Hope of Future Glory." As the motive was an external glory, so the result was an incredible externalising of the religious and moral life. "The value of Good is left out of account. Not the doing of good, as such, but merely formal accuracy in fulfilling the letter of the Law is the aim. And notwithstanding all zeal, nay, just because of it, true morality was the loser." \*

The predominance of legalism seriously affected the Hebrew thought of God. The old free spirit of the son in the Father's House gave place to the hardening conception of the worker by contract, whose loveless labours the distant taskmaster was bound to reward. God was conceived as a far-off Oriental magnate, whose exclusive and artificial holiness must not be contaminated by the common and unclean things of a work-a-day world.

The people were a people of the law, but not even through the law could they reach God.

Ever since the Deuteronomic legislation came into force in the time of Josiah, about 630 B.C., it was declared to be unlawful to offer sacrifices anywhere but in Jerusalem, the whole worship being concentrated here in its sole and only legitimate sanctuary.

\* "His virtues were his pride ; and that one vice  
Made all his virtues gewgaws of no price."—COWPER, *Truth*.

It cannot, however, be maintained that such zeal was merely superficial,

Twice a day in the daily service a burnt offering was sacrificed. In no circumstances could this be dispensed with. We find for example that in the year seventy, Jerusalem had for a considerable time been invested by the Romans, and that in consequence the scarcity of food had reached a climax, but for all that, the daily sacrifices continued to be regularly offered, and it was felt by the besieged as their heaviest calamity when at last they found themselves in the position of having no more to offer. This act, it must be remembered, regarded as central and all important, could be performed only by a priest, who in virtue of his sacred office was raised above the people. He stood between the people and their God, while sacrifice as apart from morals, and the law as apart from conviction, were regarded as objects in themselves.

We can now again take up the words of Christ. "Woman, believe me, neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. The hour cometh and now is, when true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for such does the Father seek to be His worshippers. God is spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

In spite of the externalism we have noted in the current religion, the premise that God is spirit would be readily granted; Jews and Samaritans alike believe in the non-material nature of God.\*

\* In a prayer attributed to Solomon—I Kings viii. 27—we read, "But will God in very deed dwell on the earth? Behold heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain THEE, how much less this House that I have builded."

“But,” to quote Godet, “what is absolutely new in this saying is the consequence which Jesus draws from this axiom in relation to worship. He sees springing up from the ancient notion, converted into reality by the Holy Spirit, a new people, who, in virtue of the *filial* spirit with which they shall be animated, will celebrate an unceasing and universal worship.” Men, as children, are to worship their spiritual Father in spirit. It is the deepest element of the human soul which is to hold communion with the Divine. True worship can be rendered only in the inner sanctuary of the heart. “Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost that is in you, which ye have from God?” \* “The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands.” † “Behold the Kingdom of God is within you.” ‡

No limit of place or time may be set to Christian worship. Not on Gerizim, not in Jerusalem, but in the heart of man stands the altar of God. “Every man has in his heart an altar, on which, if he invoke it in earnestness, purity, and love, the Spirit of God will descend.” §

Ceremonial rites are no condition of Divine favour. Madame Guyon has described ceremony as “only a jet thrown up from the worship of the spirit,” and while Jesus lays emphasis on the spiritual nature of worship, he does not fix its outward form. If he nowhere expressly prohibits ceremonial, he nowhere

\* 1 Corinthians vi. 19.

† Acts vii. 48.

‡ Luke xvii. 21.

§ Mazzini,

enjoins it.\* He visits Temple and Synagogue, and takes part in the great religious festivals, as a prophet with a message to deliver rather than as a participant. Indeed when he cleanses the Temple of its thieves he appeals to the prophets, whose protest against externalism we have already considered, quoting Isaiah—"My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." He thus ignores the general conception of the temple worship as culminating in ceremonial sacrifice, and elevates the spiritual exercise of prayer to a position of primary instead of secondary importance. But when he emphasises the importance of prayer, he establishes no rite! The context of "The Lord's Prayer" as well as the whole spirit of His teaching, precludes our reading into it any ceremonial injunction. We can only view its hurried recitation by a congregation as one of those vain repetitions which the Gentiles use, and as a direct contravention of the solemn command "*After this manner pray ye.*"

Jesus does not once enjoin that observance of external rites which was a matter of supreme importance to the Jew. "There were in His day," writes Principal Fairbairn, "two traditional ideas of the religious life, the priest's and the scribe's; but His did not conform to either. The priests made the temple, with its worship and priesthood, the

\* The injunction to the cleansed leper to show himself to the priest can hardly be strained into an acceptance of the priestly order, it is rather the establishment of official testimony to a great deed. When Jesus speaks of the gift offered at the altar, and of swearing by the altar, he acknowledges and accepts the temple ceremonial only in so far as he does not challenge it, but both are clearly references by way of illustration.



great factor of religion . . . The holy man was the man who came often to the temple and made generous use of its priesthood, places, articles, and modes of worship. . . . The ideal of the scribes was different, yet akin . . . The holy man of the scribe forgot no sacred day or solemn time, neglected no fast, gave alms of all he had, prayed by book, worshipped according to rule, and otherwise toiled and comported himself as became a man who lived by a written and traditional code." Judged by every criterion of the Pharisee, Jesus was an irreligious man.

"In His daily and familiar life they found none of the customary signs of a religion . . . nay, they found not only these absent, but a conduct that seemed studiously to offend—kindly speech to Gentiles, association with publicans and sinners, unheard-of liberty allowed to His disciples and claimed for Himself on the Sabbath; the right to do all this vindicated by the denial of the authority of tradition and the elders, and by the assertion of His own."

He sets ceremonial observance aside with perfect inner freedom when he finds that it hinders the doing of his Father's will. Against the Levitical idea of holiness Jesus sets the purity of the heart. He contrasts the moral inwardness of man's due attitude to the will of God with the mere externality of servile obedience. "His ideal of worship was filial love expressed in filial speech and conduct; and this love made all places sacred, all times holy, all service religious, all actions duties done to the Father in heaven." A divine passion glows through the atmosphere of cold legality. The gulf between God and



man, which the scribe had sought to widen, is bridged. The meagre conception of the church as a temple of ritual, becomes that of a brotherhood for service, "where hand joins hand in helpfulness:" a spiritual house built up of living stones, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices.

In his "Dynamic Faith" Dr. Rufus Jones takes as his cardinal text the passage in the Beatitudes "The Pure in Heart shall see God," and proceeds:—

"No amount of psalm-singing or church going, no amount of creed signing or pious attitudes, could make a man see God if his heart was still impure and if he was still clinging to some pet sin; and this fact was as clear as daylight to Geo. Fox, who himself went straight to the heart of things and based his whole message on this practical truth, that there can be no substitute in religion for purity of heart. This fundamental ground, viz., that religion begins with a more or less clear vision of God and that the vision depends solely on purity of heart, is reason enough, were there no others, why the rituals and ordinances of the historic church are discarded by Friends."

Later, quoting the words "That they may be one in us, as thou Father art in me, and I in Thee," Rufus Jones adds:—"It is out of this ground that the Society of Friends springs into existence."

We are not concerned to-night with the deductions drawn by Friends from the Gospels and particularly from the Johannine view of Christ. These we reserve till next week, but let us endeavour to understand more clearly in what this "ground" consists.

Jesus at the well sets aside the whole outward paraphernalia of the National religion with its narrow exclusiveness, and in the wonderful prayer which we

read at the outset, he prays that those whom the Father has given Him may behold His glory and "that the love wherewith thou lovest me may be in them and I in them—that they may be perfected into one."

In the time at our disposal it is impossible to collect all the evidence, but we cannot ponder these passages nor study the Gospels as a whole without recognising that Christ sought by His ministry, and by the unfolding of His love upon the Cross, to open to all the vision of God; to show men an inward kingdom, peaceful amid the strifes of the world, a city holy though environed by sin, a life pure though in the temple of the flesh, a communion free without restriction to the sons of men. That neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem, neither here nor there, neither through ritual worship nor ceremonial sacrifice, neither through a priestly caste nor a written code, nor an historic church, but in and through the interpenetration of the individual soul by himself, his passion, and his love, lay the road to Eternal Life. Not after bleeding heifers, but a contrite spirit, not after clean linen but a pure mind, not after marble walls with slabs of gold, but a pure love responding to his own, did he yearn, who hung with breaking heart upon the cross. From the foundation of the world God had loved His Son, from the foundation the spirit of the Christ had striven with the sons of men, love with selfishness, purity with sin. From the foundation, guided by unseen hands, men had groped their way out of a great darkness. First glimmered the twilight and then shone the full day. To men the world had been a hard riddle. Pain, sin,

sorrow, strife, the deep shadows chasing the sunshine, the chill gloom beyond the grave, what of them ?

But with the passion of the Cross came hope. The hidden love of God started into visible shape, the hidden purpose of life lay uncovered. Fear had built altars of sacrifice, but love was to pull them down, ignorance had regarded particular places, times and seasons as alone sacred, but Love was to show all life, all nature, all time, sacred to the holiest purpose. Nothing God had made was unclean, nor was anything void of His presence. The earth was His garment, the stars His diadem, the very air His breath. "I and the Father," God and Christ, are one. The message of the Cross is the message of the Universe—redeeming love the beginning, the passage and the end. And in truth, God in Christ is "closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet," for is not His Kingdom within ? How hard to learn that truth, how far is the Christian Church from accepting it as the kernel of her message.

And yet to the pure in heart, to the quick eye of the trusting soul, the veil of the flesh is rent in twain, the gates of death fly apart and the glory of heaven lies revealed. To the soul that feeds upon the bread of life the outward conventions of religion are no longer needful. Hid with Christ in God, there is for him small place for outward rites, for all experience is a holy baptism, a perpetual supper with the Lord, and all life a sacrifice holy and acceptable unto God.

This hidden life, this inward vision, this immediate and intimate union between the soul and God—this, as revealed in Jesus Christ, is the basis of the Quaker faith.

## THE BASIS OF THE QUAKER FAITH. II.

Read pp. 42-43 Fox's Journal. Vol. I.\*

WE endeavoured last week to understand the meaning of the conversation by the well of Samaria. Jesus, rejecting Gerizim and Jerusalem, points to the heart of man as the true seat of worship and sacrifice. Holiness is achieved neither through a place nor in a rite, but in character. The Kingdom of God is within, and the relation between man and God, independent of ritual sacrifice or priestly caste, is immediate, intimate and personal.

To be a Christian is indeed to be hid with Christ in God. It was in this teaching of the inward kingdom revealed in Jesus Christ that we said the basis of the Quaker faith, as discovered in the Gospels, must be found.

To-night we turn from the Gospels to the deduction—from the basis to the superstructure.

It has often been supposed that Quakerism is, if not a bundle of oddities, at least a series of negations. The oddities have gone. In so far as they were comprised in broad-brimmed beavers, collarless coats, and coal-scuttle bonnets, they represented a true thought caricatured, a living protest fossilised into a dead custom. Beginning as an attempt to free the individual from the tyranny of fashion, the Quaker

\* Bi-Centenary Edition, 1901. 2 vols.



costume became, in time, a fashion in itself which deserved to die. The teaching that life should be simple, was surely lost when the young maidens of a Quaker congregation were told to appear at the next Preparative meeting in the dresses they proposed to wear at the ensuing Quarterly Meeting—to appear, in fact, at a dress-rehearsal with the Elders as critics.

But this is a type of Quakerism which lingers, if at all, only at Philadelphia, and we need not let it detain us.

The second supposition, that Quakerism is a system of negations, requires, however, some attention.

We do *not* baptise, we do *not* take the Supper, we do *not* have a separated ministry, we do *not* consecrate our Meeting-houses, we do *not* take oaths, we do *not* fight; what have we here, says the outsider, but a bundle of negations? and too often Friends have lent colour to this view. They have laid stress upon the things they do *not* believe or do *not* do, and have failed to lay bare the positive basis of the faith which is thus expressed. The supposition is, of course, mistaken. The Quaker faith, rightly understood, so far from being negative, is the profoundest affirmation, but in view of the false impression so often given, let us examine the matter briefly.

And let us take as our main theme the Quaker worship, for this is the central outward fact of the fellowship.

To make our examination effective we must go back for a moment to Apostolic times, not indeed that we may prove a spiritual pedigree or insist on historical continuity, but rather that we may under-



stand the ground for the Quaker practice. As Dr. Fairbairn says, "It is a small thing, nay more, an easy thing, for a church to make out its historical continuity and catholicity—that is only a matter of deft criticism and courageous argument; but it is a great thing for any church to have created or be creating a society corresponding to the ideal of Christ."

This is the ideal issue, and therefore our interest in history will only be in so far as it tends to reveal identity between the theory of a Friends' meeting and the ideal of Christ, nor can our interest in this question be only in relation to the Society of Friends, but rather must it be to the whole Christian experience.

We take then, the beginning of the Apostolic Church.

In her earliest days the sense of brotherhood was strong. McGiffert, one of the great authorities on the Apostolic Age, dwells on the simplicity and warmth of early church life.

"It would be a mistake to picture the Christians as holding regular and formal services such as are held to-day. . . . It was . . . in their daily intercourse with one another and in the little family gatherings from house to house, that their Christian life found fullest expression and the sense of Christian brotherhood, which was all-controlling, had freest play."

"The most notable and characteristic feature of the Corinthian services, described by Paul, is the immediate activity and controlling influence of the Holy Spirit. It was supposed that those who took part in the Meetings did it, not on their own impulse, but under the impulse of the Spirit, and that all their utterances, consequently, were divinely inspired. Whoever had a psalm, or a teaching, or a revelation, or a tongue, or an interpretation, received it

from the Spirit, and when he communicated it to his brethren, it was accepted as a divine and not a merely human utterance. It is in the light of this fact that the freedom which characterised the Corinthian services must be interpreted. The confinement of the right of participation to a special class, or to certain regularly appointed individuals, was evidently quite unknown. Every Christian had the right to take part, and the woman's right was equal to the man's."

The religious meetings of the Christians became in time more regular and stereotyped. In Rome, before the end of the first century, officials, appointed by the brethren, were in control of the services, and the movement which was ultimately to establish a hierarchy had begun. The history of the Church indeed is one of continual elaboration and absorption. The Greek orator becomes the Christian preacher, and the Christian sermon is modelled on the lines of the Hall of Rhetoric. The spiritual fervour of the early exhortations evaporates in the fine phrases of the sophist and rhetorician. Free participation in divine worship is increasingly restricted, till the priests perform before an audience the drama of the Mass. The Church under imperial patronage puts on earthly armour, she vies with ancient Egypt in the splendour of her ceremonial, and overlays the inward reality with a glitter of ritual.

There is a powerful passage in the Hibbert lectures of Dr. Hatch which we cannot forbear quoting:—

"Christianity came into the educated world in the simple dress of a prophet of righteousness. It won that world by the stern reality of its life, by the subtle bonds of its brotherhood, by its divine message of consolation

and of hope. Around it thronged the race of eloquent talkers who persuaded it to change its dress and to assimilate its language to their own. It seemed thereby to win a speedier and completer victory. But it purchased conquest at the price of reality. With that its progress stopped. There has been an element of sophistry in it ever since, and so far as in any age that element has been dominant, so far has the progress of Christianity been arrested. Its progress is arrested now because many of its preachers live in an unreal world. The truths they set forth are truths of utterance, rather than truths of their lives. But if Christianity is to be again the power that it was in its earliest ages, it must renounce its costly purchase. . . . The hope of Christianity is that the class which was artificially created may ultimately disappear, and that the sophistical preaching will melt as a transient mist before the preaching of the prophets of the ages to come, who, like the prophets of the ages that are long gone by, will speak 'only as the spirit gives them utterance.' "

The upheaval of the Reformation was in some measure a protest against that unreality which Dr. Hatch deplores; a protest which is perhaps best illustrated by the teaching of George Fox. In the seventeenth century there rose under his guidance a people who, with no original intention of founding a separate sect, ultimately became a distinct religious body, known to this day as the Society of Friends. Their testimony was against externalism. They met for worship with but little pre-arrangement. Those whose vocal ministry was acceptable were officially encouraged and called ministers, but with no rite of ordination, no priestly function, or special privileges. None were forbidden to speak or pray. All the men and women of the congregation shared alike in the responsibility of a priesthood free to all in the brother-

hood of Christ. They met on a basis of silence, believing that there is a worship of the heart too profound for the utterance of the lips, though this silence in no way withheld liberty from those who had a message to deliver.\* Symbolism in worship having shown a universal tendency to obscure the truth it once revealed, they disregarded all forms, fearful lest the spirituality and inwardness of their worship might suffer. They built their meeting houses in simple fashion, that no sensuous æsthetic delight in outward beauty might displace the dependence on the inward light in the temple not made with hands. The underlying principle of their worship was the responsibility and the priesthood of each worshipper, and his immediate dependence upon the Spirit of God. Worship cannot be "done by proxy." W. E. Gladstone has spoken of "the work of divine worship," "of the sustained mental effort necessary to complete the act wherein every Christian is a priest." Upon this truth, which a spiritually indolent age seems eager to forget, William Penn long ago laid emphasis. He says:—

"If you would know God and worship and serve God as you should do, you must come to the means he has ordained, and given for that purpose. Some seek it in books, some in learned men; but what they look for is IN THEMSELVES, though not of themselves, but they overlook it. The voice is too still, the seed too small and the light shineth in darkness. Wherefore, O Friends, turn in,

\* It should be remembered that the modern objection to singing had no part in the original protest of the Society of Friends. A minute of 1675 in the manuscript Book of Discipline bids Friends not to quench or discourage "Reverant singing, breathing forth an Heavenly sound of Joy with Grace, with the Spirit and with Understanding . . . to Edification and comfort in the Church of Christ." Singing can only be inconsistent with spiritual worship when it is professional or insincere.



turn in, I beseech you ! There you want Christ, and there you must find him ; and, blessed be God, there you may find him. Seek and you shall find ; I testify for God."

"He who only hears," says Prof. Drummond, "leaves life and character in arrears, while truth and knowledge may seem to increase. His organism acquires a growing immobility, and finally exists in a state of entire intellectual helplessness and inertia. . . What cost nothing can come to nothing. . . Such an one becomes at last the listless, useless, pampered parasite of the pew. . . his will unbraced, his crude soul unquickened and unimproved."

Such in the briefest outline is the historical explanation for the Quaker theory of Worship ; it has its roots in the early practice, or rather in that which underlay the early freedom of the Corinthian Church, namely, the Gospel teaching of the inward kingdom. It is no mere asceticism as some suppose, no mere denial of the place of art and ritual and of all the rich accessories of public worship. It is rather an assertion of an inward truth so rich that by its side all accessories are poor.

So with the supper and the baptism. I do not propose to discuss these questions argumentatively and in detail,—time does not allow. But we may at least take notice that modern scholarship is in the most remarkable way justifying the position intuitively taken by Fox and the early Quakers towards these ancient rites. Harnack, Weiszächer, McGiffert, Hatch, and Lindsay, have between them, either directly or by inference, practically established the Quaker position.



McGiffert, for example, claims (speaking of the supper) that there is no evidence whatever that the earliest disciples held a special service or partook of a special communion meal. He maintains rather that whenever they ate together they partook of the Lord's Supper and looked back with tender hearts in the breaking of their daily bread, to his life of service and of sacrifice.

Of the baptism, we may remark that Jesus, when he took up the little children and said "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven," was speaking of Jewish children, who, according to the Jewish custom would not have been baptized, and the Quaker position is really summed up in the words, "John indeed baptized with water but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

It is the inward change, the inward purification, the spiritual fact and not the outward symbol, that belongs in truth to the kingdom of God. Neither in the refusal to baptize nor to take the supper, do Friends set forth a negation. They assert, on the contrary, the positive truth that the religious life is the inward life of the spirit. But no place or time can limit its action, nor any symbol adequately express it, and that therefore of necessity no priest can claim to intervene between that inward life and its source of strength and power.

Again and again this assertion is put forward by Fox. He will not take an oath, for no outward rite can make a false man true, nor strengthen the truth when it is spoken. The steeple-house at Nottingham was a "great idol," not because it was a steeple-house, or because Fox had an insane hatred of churches as

some suppose, but because in this church as in so many others at the time, Pharisaism was rampant, and the dry externals of dogmatic teaching were offered as the bread of life.

The hireling ministry was hireling not so much because it was paid, as that it was supported by the state, rather than by the free-will offerings of the people, because it loved soothsaying rather than truth-speaking, and feared human authority rather than the hidden majesty of God. In all its aspects it is not so much that the teaching of Fox was new. What was really new was its fearless application to every activity of life. Fox had the courage to be logical. Other churches profess belief in inward guidance, but they dare not found their constitution upon their belief.

There is no deeper scepticism as to the reality and directness of human intercourse with God, the great truth which Fox realised in himself when he heard "one, even Jesus Christ, who could speak to his condition," and which he made the pivot of his teaching,—than that which has created the priest and endowed him with authority.

The conception of the inwardness of the Kingdom faithfully interpreted, cut at the root of all the shams, all mere conventionalities, all religion by proxy, all unbrotherliness, all injustice, all artificial limitations. Interpreted with sincerity, it worked itself out into a practical gospel, a spiritual and social order transcending all contemporary ideals in its realization of lofty purity, and loving fellowship.

It stamped the individual with a new dignity,

and gave him an independence that no earthly tribunal could fetter. But it did not develop independence at the cost of brotherhood, rather it deepened the sense of social responsibility which in time was to liberate the slaves, and may yet go far to remove the curse of poverty and redress the unequal distribution of the opportunities of life.

Professor James has given eloquent testimony to the consequences which flowed from Fox's insistence upon a neglected teaching :—

“The Quaker religion which he founded is something which it is impossible to overpraise. In a day of shams it was a religion of veracity rooted in spiritual inwardness and a return to something more like the original Gospel truth than men had ever known in England. So far as our Christian sects to-day are evolving into liberality they are simply reverting in essence to the position which Fox and the early Quakers so long ago assumed.”

I quote the passage in no spirit of vain-glory, it is spoken of Fox and his work, and not of us.

To-day the gulf between theory and practice is sufficiently wide, and it must rest with this generation of Friends by renewed faithfulness to vindicate their claim to so great a testimony.

You observe what Professor James says, “so far as our Christian sects to-day are evolving into liberality they are simply reverting in essence to the position which Fox and the early Quakers so long ago assumed.” It is important to observe the bearing of that paragraph. It witnesses to a positive aspect of Fox's testimony that we are sometimes in danger of forgetting. The dependence upon the inward

involves a comparative disregard of the outward marks by which men were accustomed to measure the value of persons and things.

Why have Friends no rigid standard of orthodoxy, no exact outward conditions of fellowship? The absence of these checks upon the individual have not seldom been deplored, and yet it is the very freedom of the Quaker in these matters that makes him strong. He cannot accept superficial judgment.

A man may go to the theatre and yet be less worldly than some rigorous attender at church or chapel, he may take the supper as a memorial feast, and yet his inward attitude, free from sacerdotal dependence, be that of a true Friend. And so he welcomes into his fellowship all who are spiritually akin with him, not asking, nay, not caring, for a rigid outward uniformity, for these things of the outward life are immaterial where the inward unity prevails.

There is a significant incident in the life of Fox, which illustrates my meaning. One of his early preachers, Humphrey Wooldrig, baptized a convert in 1658. Wooldrig wrote to Fox that Friends had judged him for it, as indeed they had. He explained that he had baptized for the "satisfaction and comfort" of the convert.

Wooldrig wrote to Fox in full confidence that his action would be approved and his confidence was justified. Fox refused to condemn him. He denied the necessity of the outward rite, but he declined to limit the fellowship by a uniform outward observance.

There is nothing more desolating, nothing more subversive of true brotherhood, than the separatist



spirit. Fox had none of this, and though the melancholy history of Quaker disownments shows that the Society of Friends failed to maintain the loftiness and the true inwardness of Fox's conception, we may hope that as enlightenment spreads, we may break away from the pitiful limitations that have been so mischievously imposed.

We have, indeed, no call to waste our strength in such miserable negations. It is for us to recognise rather the occasion and the need, which await the positive message, and this is true even though we confine ourselves to the testimony of worship.

At the present time, we are face to face with a movement, which lays extreme emphasis on ritual, and narrows its conceptions of brotherhood to a rigid outward conformity. Does the present generation of Englishmen recognise what that emphasis involves? Can history show a single instance of ritualistic development unaccompanied by the *ultimate* spiritual enfeeblement of the worshipper, and the creation of a priestly class? Can the teaching of Jesus be reconciled with a sacerdotalism which re-establishes in the supreme place that practice of ceremonial sacrifice which was condemned by the prophets and set aside by Christ? Can we find even a trace of Christ's teaching in the denial to the layman of access to the Holiest save through the mediation of the priest? These are urgent questions. We believe that this movement now agitating the Anglican Church is but a fresh illustration of those retrograde tendencies in the practice of worship, which, as we have seen, assert themselves in Pagan and Christian churches alike.



God is Spirit and we must worship Him in spirit. To whatever religious denomination we may belong, and this is no mere sectarian question, true spiritual inwardness is clearly essential. The worshipper must recognise his own priesthood; he must seek to come into living communion with the Father of Spirits; he must take his own share in the work of worship. He must not contemplate divine service as a mere propitiatory gift offered to God for his own protection, for

. . . "Book and Church and Day are given  
For Man, not God—for Earth, not Heaven."

He must not merely repeat in hymn or prayer the words of another; he must think his own thoughts, he must make the words his own. Praise has its place, the glad overflowing of a thankful heart, but God's House is also the House of Prayer.

*"The profoundest of all human wants is the want of God."* Prayer must be, not the vain repetition of the Gentile, but the passionate cry of the soul that seeks a knowledge of God, the reverent concentration of the whole inner being upon its supreme ideal, that movement of the soul which leads it into the light of love and the presence of the righteous Father. We stand in sore need of such prayer in our modern life, and of the conscious unity with God in thought and action which is its benediction. There is a danger that we may get further away from Him than the trembling savage who heard His voice in the rustling branches. After setting forth the testimony to man's sense of the Divine, from the very beginning of self-

conscious life, must the historian write down the twentieth century as so rich and busy that it forgot "the King Eternal, immortal, invisible?"

A recent writer says,\*

"Have a soul of your own. Be your true self. Think, realise, reflect, until you have a measure of unborrowed conviction, which establishes a centre of repose, and is a source of happiness and contentment—a centre which yields to no outer tumult, but is ever receptive to the Divine Self; which never harbours fear or doubt, no matter what the wavering self may say; which never wavers, never forgets that the individual belongs to the Universal, never relaxes its hold of the deepest, the truest, the most spiritual in life, come what may, be it sorrow, illness, or any calamity which life may bring; a centre which you will probably discover at last rests on the love of God for its strength, making it part of eternity and of all power and substance, though it be but a point in the infinite whole. And, when you lose this poise, regain it, as though you would say, 'Sit still, my soul; thou at least must not lose thy composure nor thy awareness of the eternal presence of God.'"

Silent worship is not an end in itself, though it is the only practical basis of a free ministry. But even silent worship, if it be truly spiritual, does not lack the unifying element of fellowship. We remember Robert Barclay's beautiful tribute to its influence:—"When I came in to the Silent Assemblies of God's People, I felt a secret power among them, which touched my heart; and, as I gave way unto it, I found the Evil weakening in me, and the Good raised up."

There is a strong tendency to ignore this value of fellowship in worship. Some claim that they can worship best alone upon the hills or in the fields. No

\* Horatio Dresser—"The Power of Silence."

spot is more sacred than another, for the whole world is consecrated by the presence of God,—

Where'er they seek Thee Thou art found,  
And every place is hallowed ground.

But, while lonely worship has its place, we set ourselves against the whole teaching of Christ if we deny the place of fellowship in worship. True worship is never selfish. In George Eliot's words, "One wants a temple besides the outdoor temple,—a place where human beings do not ramble apart but *meet* with a common impulse." And as true worship can never be selfish, so, though it may have in it an element of mysticism, it will never be impractical. Divine service consists not in ceremonial, nor yet wholly in the gratification of personal desires after the infinite, but in labour for the Brotherhood.

The work of Jesus Christ must be the work of his Church. Such work is worship. Not the intoning of the Lord's Prayer, but the passionate longing of men, fired by the vision of Christ and sustained by him, to do the Father's will on Earth as it is done in Heaven.

There is room yet for a witness to that inward life, which draws out nourishment from the hidden love of God, and bears rich fruit in holy fellowship, blessed by the unity of a common consciousness that God, the world, and humanity are one.



## THE PROBLEM, AND A PLEA.

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The previous addresses are mainly historic and recitative in thought and fact, though expressed with a thrill of present actuality and need. The two following essays, though prior in date to the preceding lectures, fall into sequence here, as representing some of the conclusions to which the writer was led by his study of the past, by his careful observation of the present conditions around him.

As before stated, worship came first in his apprehension of the relationship between the human and the Divine. In the contemplation of worship, the problem which pressed itself most urgently upon him was that of the maintenance of a free, lay, life-quickenning ministry.

The first essay deals with this problem in its widest aspect including the formative influence of Boarding School education. The second goes on to plead for further educational facilities for Bible study, for the work of the Ministry, and for more efficient service in the building up of religious fellowship.

The generous establishment of Woodbrooke has been an answer to the growing sense of need forcibly expressed in these two papers.

They appeared originally in the *Present Day Papers*, in September and December, 1899.





## THE PROBLEM OF A FREE MINISTRY.

**S**TIRRED by a general sense of shortcoming, the recent Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends published a pastoral letter on Worship and Ministry.\* Both the letter, and the discussion which gave rise to it provide us with helpful and encouraging suggestions, but neither claim to solve the problem which a free lay ministry presents. If these suggestions to individuals are to have their full value, we must go further, and consider what are the conditions of life in the church at large to foster a strong ministry.

But in thus approaching our subject, let us briefly anticipate two questions :—

(1) Is a free ministry a vital element in our conception of public worship ?

(2) Is the Quaker conception of public worship of essential and permanent value ?

In the pastoral letter already referred to, we are told that “an active attitude of soul is of the very essence of a good meeting.” This means that we recognise what has been well called “the divine work of worship,” the need for that individual exercise of spirit, without which there can be no true communion with God. We ignore the outward help of ritual and of a set ser-

\* “Worship and Ministry.” A letter from London Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Oversight, 1899, to the congregations and individual members of the Society of Friends.

vice, because of the stress we lay on this supreme individual necessity. Our silent waiting is the opportunity for the prisoned soul to escape into the freedom of spiritual intercourse.

Friends do not assert that ceremonial precludes true spiritual communion. But they believe that in the course of history, symbolism has always tended to become a hindrance rather than an aid to spiritual worship, and that an ordered service, however dignified and uplifting, offers an inadequate and an inelastic substitute for the immediate dependence of the soul upon God.

Apart from all sacerdotal pretensions which we reject as contrary to the teaching of Jesus, we hold that to limit the service of the vocal ministry to one person, or to a separate class, is not, as is commonly maintained, a necessary condition of church life.

The freedom of the ministry prevalent in the early days of the Christian Church is still the ideal, and its restriction in the interests of order and dignity, even if justified on the ground of human infirmity, cannot fairly be presented as a survival of the *ideally* fittest or as a stage in *ideal* development. The surrender of the "lay" ministry involved the quenching of the Spirit, the closing of the door to the divine call to prophesy. Friends believe that the restriction of the ministry is at best but a stage to be outgrown, and that it is their office to seek the reinstatement of the higher ideal. The doctrine of immediate dependence carries with it the diffusion of responsibility and an emphasis on "the divine work of worship," which ought powerfully to combat those tendencies to parasi-

tism and to worship by proxy, which a prearranged service of necessity invites.

In spite of our acknowledged weakness, this ideal has been a source of strength in our Society. It is to this special sense of the share and responsibility of the individual in the work of worship, that we must largely attribute that force of character which has given the Society of Friends an influence out of proportion to its numbers.

A free ministry, then, is a vital element in our conception of worship.

But, in the second place, can we further claim that our conception of worship is of essential and permanent value ?

To find our answer we need only study the widely prevailing tendency towards more elaborate ceremonial, and the facility with which the element of real worship is lost in musical or other services which do not appeal to the spiritual faculties. This is an age of pleasure. Religion must be dressed in pleasing raiment, or it is rejected as narrow and intolerant. The Sword of the Word must have a velvet scabbard ; the inexorable realities of spiritual law must be hidden in a golden haze. The divine work of worship is too onerous. It must be lightened or evaded by ceremonial, or by the offices of a priest. But spiritual consciousness is not the involuntary emotion produced by music or ritual. It is the fruit of a voluntary effort of the soul, and no evasion of spiritual exercise can give us spiritual life.

The clear testimony to this truth afforded by the Society of Friends in their ideal of worship is, then, of essential and permanent value.

But are we in a position to present this ideal, not as a beautiful theory, but as a living fact? It is when we come to answer this question that we falter, for we know at heart that our meetings for worship are the weakest point in our church life. The responsibility of a free ministry must be carefully considered in the light of this fact, and such consideration will show that the free ministry presents a practical problem which has not yet been solved.

In thus treating our subject as a problem for solution, we need scarcely be reminded that nothing can be accomplished without pure life, heart surrender, and spiritual power. If these be absent, nothing else can have any value.

It is needful to make this clear at the outset, because those who make practical suggestions are sometimes supposed to confound machinery with power. There are those who feel a deep distrust of any approach to system in matters relating to our meetings for worship. Their attitude of mind is illustrated in its extreme form in the words of a valued Friend, who says :—

“ It is very important to remember that no change of organization will put new life into souls, no change of methods can increase the spiritual tone of the community. A man’s surroundings will not improve him. System will not make a healthy church.”

These statements belong to that class of half truths which, unless rightly qualified, are apt to do serious harm. The words are true if we take them to mean that without spiritual power the spiritual machinery of the church is impotent for good. But



they are not true if we understand them as implying that changes in organization are valueless even where they are the result of spiritual power intelligently directed. Practical measures, such as changes in organization, must necessarily affect the church for good or ill. The Friend already quoted virtually admits this in acknowledging that "there are certain and indispensable conditions by which alone we can carry the Word of Life to others." Among these are mentioned study and meditation. But to secure time for study and meditation in the life of a business man involves the proper arrangement of affairs, and such a change in the organization of a business life may undoubtedly result in a direct access of spiritual power to the Church. What applies in this way to the individual applies also to the church as a whole. As already insisted, we shall find, as we seriously study the problem of our ministry, both in the light of past history and present conditions, that though the question is primarily one of spiritual power, it is certainly one which calls for practical common sense. Spiritual power and church organization are so closely inter-related that they cannot be fully considered apart. The familiar illustration of the Evangelical revival must not be forgotten. Great as was the influence of Whitefield, it would have been largely evanescent but for the organizing genius of Wesley. The fear of what is called the systematizing of spiritual matters is nevertheless entitled to all respect. If the Society of Friends were to become a mere mechanism, its day would be over. That point is conceded; the question which remains is the nature and limit of the

organization needful to secure the healthy development of the ministry in our church.

Having thus attempted to clear the ground, we are free to consider our subject as now outlined, and it may help us to escape from traditional ideas to view it for a moment from the standpoint of an outsider.

A member of another denomination, aware that his own clergyman or minister had passed through a severe course of training, and possessed mental equipment and leisure for his service altogether beyond what any layman in his congregation possessed, would probably feel considerable surprise on discovering a group of laymen in the same walk of life as himself, content to dispense with the minister, and willing to supply the ministry themselves. He would note that these laymen, so far from being men of much leisure or scholarship, were of that class who are chiefly busy all the week in office, warehouse, and shop—perhaps prominent on Town Council or School Board. He would further note that they gave their best energies to an extensive Sunday School work, without endeavouring to render this in return a support to the church. He would naturally feel that these men had dared to take upon themselves a very heavy responsibility in thus foregoing the help of a separated ministry, and departing from a universal practice. He would wonder how, with all the many claims pressing upon them, these laymen could find the means and the time to equip themselves for their voluntary service. But his wonder would increase with closer acquaintance as he discovered how few among these busy men gave much time or thought to the ministry,

and how readily its claims were permitted to give way to others, which were deemed more urgent.

Doubtless, some things would favourably impress him. The freedom from monetary considerations would come upon him with a sense of relief. He would at once appreciate the marked service of women's ministry. He would learn to recognise that laymen, unacquainted with Biblical Criticism or modern scholarship, can gather material for helpful sermons in the practical experience of a busy week, and that the effect of such ministry, coming from a manufacturer, or shopkeeper, or artizan, had its peculiar value. He would notice the existence of a spontaneous ministry of real spiritual helpfulness, and of a type impossible under the conditions of his own denomination, and would recognise that, in spite of the disadvantages of scanty leisure and imperfect equipment, some few of their ministers could fill the pulpit of any denomination with distinction. But these considerations could not conceal from him the fact that a large proportion of the ministry failed in its purpose, and lacked that force and application which better equipment and further knowledge would have given to it, and he would hardly be surprised when he discovered a prevalent sense of shortcoming. Even if he did not condemn the lay ministry as impracticable, he would infer an inadequate conception either of the value and purpose of the ministry, or of the self-sacrifice it involves.

Without accepting this sketch (which has been constructed entirely from the actual comments of friendly outsiders), as either accurate or complete,

we shall unite in acknowledging that self-sacrifice is the price of our ideal. Without this it would indeed be found, as some have pronounced it, a beautiful, but impracticable dream.

Nor does the measure of that self-sacrifice decrease as time goes by. We hardly realise the advantages which the ministers of other denominations enjoy. The rich store of modern scholarship is placed within their reach. Picked men are at their service as teachers and guides. Freed from the worry and distractions of business life, the young man called to the ministry may bend himself whole-heartedly to the work of equipment. Only ignorance will maintain that these advantages are of no moment. At our Summer Schools we learn to measure our loss. Moreover, the standard of training in other churches is being continually raised. The new learning, the work of men of the stamp of Robertson Smith, is beginning to tell. Those who come under this influence, infuse new life into their ministry. Their interpretation of the Bible has a freshness that ours sorely lacks, and the life and teaching of Christ, studied not only in a new aspect, but with unprecedented patience, are no longer presented in conventional phraseology, but with the nervous force of a compelling message.

In this connection we must bear in mind that Friends are no longer restricted in the development of their energies. The abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts opened a field of public and municipal service hitherto closed. Prior to this change it would be more natural to concentrate upon the ministry and to travel largely, as the custom was, in the service



of the Gospel. And now the Adult School has come to assert its claims, and to absorb much of our time and strength. Moreover, our young people have escaped into the outer world. The Quaker meeting no longer holds the same large place in their imagination. Young Friends have learnt to measure by other standards. They have heard other ministry, and perhaps their hearts have first been reached in places very different from the plain Meeting-house. Their loyalty must be held by ties stronger than were deemed sufficient in the times of exclusiveness. For in those days the ministry in other denominations was seldom such as to tempt an envious comparison. But Anglican dulness and the frequent crudity of the Nonconformist are yielding place to such virile ministry as that of Canon Gore and Dr. Dale.

It may here be objected that learned or eloquent discourses are out of place in a Friends' Meeting, that too much may be made of intellectual equipment, that the Quaker ministry must be of a type by itself, and that in a meeting for worship the importance of the sermon must be relatively small.

But these objections must not be pushed too far. The cause of Christ can best be served when to the consecration of the heart is added the consecration of intellectual gifts.

Isaiah teaches us the value of an eloquence sincere and free from artificial taint, and experience shows that meetings which are not fed by thoughtful and uplifting sermons will ultimately languish. Let us remember that the phrase "meeting for worship" does not entirely express the purpose for which we



assemble. Whilst mainly for adoration and spiritual communion, it is the chief opportunity for mutual edification and instruction. Further, this is an age when it has become more than ever necessary to command the allegiance of both head and heart, especially of the young. To meet this end, we need not only spiritual warmth, but the mental sympathy that is fostered and widened by knowledge.

It is clear upon the briefest survey that the burden of a free ministry is not a light one.

In view of the equipment provided by other denominations, what are our corresponding advantages ?

Our Adult Schools and the valuable lessons of experience learnt in other fields of Christian labour, afford an equipment of an *indirect* character, but it would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that our church ignores the need for an equipment that is *direct*. Everything is left to the sense of individual responsibility. The Quaker minister often serves his meeting at considerable self-sacrifice, but his education, his religious training, and the arrangement of his time are rarely controlled by any sense of the special qualification which the ministry demands. His education has been of the ordinary middle class standard ; if he has had any definite religious instruction it has been fragmentary ; and while he is no less engrossed in business than his neighbour who profits from Sunday to Sunday by the thoughtful sermons of a trained minister, he probably still further curtails his leisure by taking a larger share in the responsibilities of citizenship. He takes on himself more work and

receives less instruction. Once in a few years an official exhortation to the ministry from the Yearly Meeting may reach him. His Meeting on Ministry and Oversight takes no steps to develop his gift, and his Elders mainly confine their office to its negative aspects.

The strong sense of responsibility, and the degree of self-sacrifice which our ministry represents, under these depressing conditions, are an encouraging evidence of life, but the limitations of such haphazard ways are only too obvious. Exhortations to our ministers will not meet the case. Our ministry labours under practical disadvantages which must be met by practical measures. Our present deficiencies cannot be overcome by thus reserving for the ministry the lees of our energy and the fag-ends of our time.

The church must come to close quarters with the problem :—How can we maintain a free ministry among busy men, who feel the exacting toll of increasing commercial competition ; and at the same time, how can we give to this ministry an intelligence, directness and attractive force, which, though the ministry may be of a different type from that of other denominations, shall at least render it comparable in effectiveness ?

In attempting to seek an escape from this apparent dilemma, let us briefly consider the attitude of mind that has led us into our present condition. It cannot be maintained that the sole explanation of our incomplete equipment is the absence of a self-sacrificing spirit. This, no doubt, plays some part, but the fact remains that while many Friends are not alive to the necessity for such equipment, there are others who deprecate it.

We believe the truer explanation lies in that dread of what are called human arrangements to which we have already had occasion to refer.

This dread rests upon weighty reasons, but it must be clearly recognised that the characteristic note of the Quaker Meeting, with its cherished freedom of spiritual dependence upon God, is endangered not by the intellectual equipment of the ministry, but by its restriction to one man or to one type. It is difficult to overestimate the extent of the mischief which this dread has wrought. In the first place, it has led to a limited view of what constitutes a call to the ministry. It is profoundly true that God does call his servant unexpectedly in the presence of a congregation, and bid him speak unprepared. We may rejoice that Friends have never minimized that supreme prophetic gift. It is also true that no minister can rightly speak without a strong conviction when he rises that what he says is said in season. But the deduction that there can be no call during the week, and no right preparation of the message, is wholly inadmissible. God works in many ways, and Friends living in the freedom of the Spirit should be the last to maintain such an artificial limitation.

The consequences of this mistaken view, now happily losing its hold, have hardly received sufficient recognition. It must be ranked with the dread of "creaturely activity" and the reckless disownments for marrying a non-member, as among the three chief causes of disaster in the recent history of our church. To it must be attributed much of our weakness in the intellectual equipment of the ministry. Indeed, in its

extreme form, this view has regarded the intellect as an enemy to be fought rather than an ally to be welcomed.

It is to this view that we must trace the almost entire neglect of the spiritual gift of a teaching ministry. Marks of preparation in a sermon have been resented, and thus through fear of giving offence, a type of mind that would have lent added definiteness and weight to the ministry has been largely excluded, and it is not too much to say that the removal of this difficulty alone would call much valuable ministry into existence. The mistaken view which practically limits the Quaker ministry to the prophetic type has caused many needlessly to doubt their qualification. We cherish the memory of those rare spiritual gifts which, in men like Stephen Grellet and Benjamin Seeborn, were so powerfully used in the service of Truth, but while we do well to value them, we cannot rightly assume that lesser gifts do not qualify for service.

Again, we must recognise that the dread of the human element has encouraged the spirit of indolence, and lulled Friends into a belief that the minister need set no time apart for study or definite meditation.

It is, however, not difficult to see that this fear of preparation has even wider consequences than those already enumerated. It is closely associated with that strange haziness which characterises the mind of the average Friend, when questioned as to the historical and spiritual significance of his church. Our ignorance, both as to the facts of our church history with their meaning for the present and the future, and the want of any adequate conception of our spiritual



heritage, is not likely to develop the gifts latent amongst us. This haziness has, to a considerable extent, robbed our ministry of its proper formative influence, and given to our appeal as a church a confused character, lacking coherence, and a clear-cut outline. A small body like the Society of Friends, which has with almost dramatic suddenness broken down its social barriers and mingled with the world after a century of aloofness, must have very clear convictions if it is not to lose its identity.

We have now discovered our main principle of action, in dealing with the problem of the lay ministry. *If there is to be a strong ministry in our church, a rich soil must be provided for its growth.*

All questions of the distribution of the ministry, especially in relation to declining meetings, or the establishment of new ones, are of subordinate importance. Something can even now be done in these fields, but until the conditions of Church life are so altered that the gift of the ministry is fostered and not discouraged, nothing great can be accomplished. Sooner or later we shall be brought up by the fact that we have not the Friends qualified for the service. As a church, we have yet to learn that a minister is *both born and made*.

Assuming, then, that we recognise our need for equipment, how and where is that equipment to begin ? Our first preparation for the ministry must be as wide as the church. In accepting the sacred burden of a free ministry, we lay it upon every member of the Society of Friends. We must so shape our life that we may bear that burden worthily. We demand more of



our members than almost any other church, and we must adopt special measures to qualify them. Our consideration of this first preparation will fall naturally under three heads :—

(1) The training of children in Friends' Boarding Schools.

(2) The religious training of our young people after leaving school, and of those who are not taught in Friends' Schools.

(3) The religious training of our adult members.

(1) *The training of children in Friends' Boarding Schools.*

During a recent visit to America, undertaken with a view to the study of the whole question upon which we are now engaged, the writer was impressed with the clear evidence that where undenominational education prevailed, it was telling adversely upon Friends.

We are aware that there are thoughtful Friends on this side of the Atlantic who deprecate any denominational colour being given to our schools. They claim that any distinctive Quaker training must be given exclusively at home and in the Meeting. This, however, will be found insufficient. In many homes the parents are not qualified to supply the needful training, while there is practically no sustained effort in the Meeting to give any training which can rightly be called distinctive. In any case, the time spent at school covers so large a part of the plastic period of life, that the church cannot neglect the valuable opportunity afforded by school instruction.

The objection to denominational education arises from the malpractices which flourish under that name.

We do not mean that our pupils shall be forced by a sort of Jesuitry into accepting statements *ex cathedra*, but we do mean that they shall have pointedly placed before them the practical, spiritual, and non-sacerdotal aspects of divine truth in relation to individual and national life. In teaching secular history, we unhesitatingly deduce the lessons or warnings offered by states founded on slavery or formed on freedom, ruled by despots or ruled by patriots, reverencing character or bent on pleasure, and it would be absurd to deprive Biblical and Church history (not forgetting the history of our own Society) of the broad lessons which they teach.

Fifty years ago, when we were an exclusive people, undenominational schools might have had much-needed liberalizing influence, but the conditions are very different to-day. It has now become necessary, if we would check the serious disaffection of educated young Friends, to provide them with the data upon which to form their opinions in later life. No boy or girl educated in a Friends' school, should leave it without having seen how, in the main, sacerdotalism has dimmed the moral vision, and without at least a knowledge of the history, and of the broad underlying principles, of our religious Society. We will have nothing to do, either with catechism or creed, and we are quite right to leave our scholars free to form their own independent judgment—for nothing else would have any but the most superficial or transient value. But it would be folly to send our young men and women out into the world ignorant even of the historical meaning of their church.

Young people, perhaps especially young men, are keenly sensitive to adverse criticism and ridicule. What chance has a young man, sent from a Friends' School to one of the Universities, with their aggressive clerical influence, if to the chaff about the silent meetings he has no explanation to offer, no conception of the spiritual beauty of the ideal it represents? Or, if he finds himself in a weak meeting without strong Ministry, there is danger, unless he has some intelligent attachment to the essential ideal of our worship, that he will become discouraged, and either yield to the seductive influence of the Anglican Church or seek robust ministry elsewhere. We lose too many of our more highly educated young people at this stage, and they will need a stronger grip on the true principles of spiritual life and worship to carry them through it.

In some of our Boarding Schools, valuable work has already been done, and their influence has been a powerful factor in stimulating the loyalty of their scholars to the Society. But our whole conception of education is inadequate—it needs broadening, and above all it needs shaping far more definitely to the peculiar needs of a membership upon which the responsibility of a free lay ministry rests.

It is not enough, as some suppose, to rely alone upon the high moral tone which is rightly held to characterize a Friends' school. We must recognise that these schools have for the work of the Society, which includes the Ministry, something of the same importance which training ships have for a fleet, and so far as is consistent with general education, they should have a curriculum specially designed to this end.

It is of contributory importance that the whole equipment and general education of our schools, apart from this special feature, should be of the highest possible standard. Our schools should be so good that no Friend need be tempted to send his children elsewhere. If this is not so already, it is due more to the lack of funds than to any fault in management. One must suppose that the exceptional importance of these schools as contributing to the spiritual efficiency of our church is not understood, otherwise it is difficult to explain why our wealthy Friends overlook our educational institutions, and allow them to struggle on under a cloud of debt, or with miserably inadequate endowments.

The especial value of denominational education, as already defined, to a small Society like ours, lends also an added importance to the position of the school teachers. Upon their influence much depends, and the church having accepted the responsibility of a free ministry, her future must be largely in their hands. The career and prospects of a Quaker teacher should then be such as to attract the highest order of mind, and to encourage the most liberal training for the service.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that Friends will be able efficiently to maintain their middle-class schools, especially if they can command the proper endowment which American Friends in their wisdom have been careful to secure. But it may be seriously doubted whether we shall have the strength to provide for those who would, in the ordinary course, be educated in Board Schools.



This, however, will only emphasise the importance of retaining our hold on the class which represents the educated and hereditary stock, whose connection with the past is too valuable to lose.

(2) *The religious training of our young people after school, and of those who are not taught in Friends' Schools.*

If we recognise the great value of our Boarding Schools, it is clearly essential that the religious training of those who are not educated by the Society should have careful attention. But no consecutive training exists ; we have some children's classes with more or less scattered teaching, but there is no constructive development carefully planned to qualify the young people for the exceptional demands of our church membership.

We need, also, training of a quality and calibre suited to those who have just left a Friends' school, but who have hardly reached the stage when private Biblical study can yield proper sustenance. The want of any arrangement by which the interests of our young people are rightly directed at a critical period of life, to the support of the meeting for worship, is already disastrous in its consequences, and calls for immediate action.

(3) *The religious training of our adult members.*

Already under this head we may chronicle the appearance of the Summer School movement, and note the valuable correspondence class of the Young Friends' Christian Fellowship Union.



These are admirable, and such work calls only for encouragement, but inasmuch as they are largely independent of the special attitude and teaching of our Religious Society, there remains an important branch of the work, which has hitherto received little attention. We have already noticed in our Society the widespread ignorance as to what constitutes our spiritual heritage. We have called attention to the vagueness of view too often found, when a Friend is questioned upon the spiritual position and historical significance of the church to which he belongs. We must supplement the Summer School work by placing within the reach of all our adult members, advanced religious teaching, similar in aim to that which we have seen to be needful for our children.

This is especially urgent in view of the more frequent admission of new members. The experience of Friends in America should impress us with the importance of this consideration. There is no doubt that where American Friends have drawn in large numbers of outsiders, they have sometimes felt the lack of that controlling and guiding influence which an intelligent understanding of the past necessarily brings. A scheme of lectures on Quaker History, on the teaching of George Fox, on the life and writings of Penn, on the Apology of Barclay, on the Journal of Woolman, or, to come to more modern times, on Elizabeth Fry, on William Allen, on John Greenleaf Whittier, should be worked out, not simply with the view of presenting biographical sketches, and interesting historical data, but in order to bring out what we have already called "the practical, spiritual, and non-

sacerdotal aspects of Divine truth," in relation to individual and national life. The isolated addresses on Friends' principles, which are at present our only substitute for more systematic work in this field, are hardly satisfactory, and are certainly insufficient.

We believe a feasible way of meeting, at least in part, the present need, would be to reserve the entire services of a suitable Friend, probably remunerated and controlled through the Summer School Continuation Committee, who would devote part of his time to necessary study, and the remainder to lecturing in different centres. These lectures would naturally be of a varied character. In some meetings a definite course might be given, in others separate lectures. In small country meetings, the magic-lantern might be used with effect, and the public might usually be encouraged to attend. The lectures could also be extended to our Adult Schools, for it is along this line, without necessarily sacrificing the undenominational character which they maintain, that the gulf between the Society and the schools is most likely to be bridged.

It will be seen, that this suggestion does not conflict with existing Summer School work, but is a development of that already begun. Even the Church of England has found it necessary to adopt like measures, and we can hardly pretend that our standard of intelligence is so high that we can dispense with such education.

Thus far, we have endeavoured to indicate some of the directions in which our general conception of equipment for membership in the Society of Friends

may be enlarged. We, have, in other words, been dwelling upon *the necessity of providing a rich soil from which the ministry may spring*. At present, the conditions of our church life are such as to starve the ministry. We do not foster its growth—we neglect the ordinary duties of the husbandman, and complain because the harvest is poor.

But there is another and a serious consideration. Is the tender plant that springs from this carefully prepared soil to be left to itself? We must accept a further responsibility. There must be means placed within the reach of any Friend, who feels the call to the ministry, for still further equipment, and for closer study.

There should be established a *permanent* Summer School, if one may be permitted thus to stretch the season of sunshine and warmth over the whole of our inclement year. This must not be a Theological College, but a permanent Bible School, open to either sex, and to persons of any age. Friends who did not feel themselves called to the ministry would be at liberty to attend, but the curriculum would be aimed mainly at the development of ministerial gifts. Without attempting to detail the scope of study, three main divisions naturally suggest themselves :—

- (1) Biblical Study.
- (2) General Church History ; and
- (3) Quaker Church History.

These subjects would be handled with the definite intention of giving clearness and force to our spiritual message. The mistake of most theological teaching lies in the fact that truth is conceived as a crystal, and not as a seed. To teach general Church History,

which, of course, includes the history of our Society, side by side with its spiritual meaning, is to avoid this error, and to set the student in the line of spiritual growth and vision.

The "lay" character of the school would be prominently kept in mind, and facilities would be offered to those whose means were limited, or who had little time to give. Some would attend only to receive sufficient advice and training to set them along lines of fruitful study at home, and much assistance might in this connection be given by correspondence classes. Such a school would necessarily commence on a small scale, and the attendance would at first be very limited especially for the longer periods of time. But as Friends are gradually brought to recognise what the responsibility of a free ministry involves, they will learn to shape their lives in subordination to it.

Let us remember, for we cannot escape the fact, that our free ministry is now upon its trial. No half measures will solve the problem which faces us. We would repeat that self-sacrifice must be the price of our ideal. Sacrifice of leisure, business sacrifices, sacrifices of money, sacrifice of personal ease and comfort. But while nothing that has been suggested can be undertaken without self-sacrifice, there is nothing to alarm. Spiritual insight remains, as it always must, the mark of the true minister, and neither the prophetic ministry, which obeys an immediate call, nor that mystic element which is the quality of a few choice souls, can be imperilled. We seek not to stereotype our worship, nor to tamper with the freedom of spiritual dependence upon God, but to secure such a



general condition of church life that spiritual growth shall be fostered, and a high standard of spiritual intelligence shall be maintained. For want of proper nourishment, the ideal of the free ministry is perishing before our eyes, and we are but seeking a rich and well-tilled soil from which every type of ministry shall spring with a robuster growth.

It may seem that even this partial solution of the problem is difficult and slow. The drudgery of hard work is evident through it all. But this must be. There is no short and easy way ; we must go back to our foundations, and begin again. We must correct the consequences of past mistakes, and, for a time, at least, there will be much labour with small reward.

This brings us at the close to that which we have never forgotten. We can do nothing without the patience of a faith that sees clear through apparent discouragement to its goal. We need the vision of the end, the sense of a high and worthy aim to spur us on, and, dependent on a Power greater than our own, we need the humble spirit which asks that it may be ever led by the Master's hand.



## A PLEA FOR A QUAKER SETTLEMENT.

“The chances of exceptional genius, moral or intellectual, in the gifted few, are highest in a society where the *average* interest, curiosity, capacity, are highest.”

*John Morley.*

**I**N the previous papers of this series, we have attempted to suggest the pressing need for evangelical effort in a world where Christian ideals have taken but partial root. The special capacities for immediate service which lie latent in the Society of Friends have seemed to us to call for development. Our endeavour in this concluding essay will be to point out one more method by which we may fortify ourselves for the work.

As we have said before, we stand to-day in the midst of a widespread materialism,—a little handful of men and women called to be heralds of the “peaceable Gospel.” Around us even the churches seem to share in the false imperialism of the age. Is not the reproach of their silence laid upon us, that we, in their default, may once again bear practical testimony to the spiritual simplicity of the Kingdom of God, and the higher possibilities of human life ?

If we have inherited in a special degree those Christian conceptions of stewardship and of ministry which alone can save the nations of the earth amid the temptations of material development, we are yet

but a feeble folk for so heavy a burden. How may we sufficiently brace ourselves to bear it ?

We cannot attempt a complete answer, as we are dealing primarily with a free ministry. Nevertheless, the question of our ministry vitally affects the whole service which our Church may render. There is a call for the searching testimony and the stern rebuke of the messenger of God. We need men and women whose lips are touched by the fire of the Holy Ghost, to point our people to the better way. No scheme of education, no Bible School, can create, or alone prepare, these prophets. Is there then no place for a practical consideration of the ways and means by which the religious life of our Society may be fostered ? Are we at all answering the questions we have put to ourselves in discussing Quaker education, Sunday and Bible Schools ?

Many who feel deeply the needs of our time, and who desire above all else the baptism of spiritual power, listen with indifference, if not with suspicion, to the advocacy of what are called "practical measures." It is not system, machinery, or organisation, but spiritual power that they seek. Why fit up elaborate pumps to suck water from a well which is already dry ? Rather let us repair to the banks of the running stream that flows from the Fountain of Life.

We clearly recognise the limit that must be set to system, organisation, and even religious education, but may we suggest another allegory ? Though the phrase is understood, no gardener really *grows* his plants. The secret springs of life that move the sap are altogether beyond his art. He can only obey the laws

which enable him to make a tangled waste of weeds blossom in ordered beauty.

The problem before us is not to manufacture ministers or prophets—that is clearly impossible—it is rather to seek those conditions which foster healthy spiritual growth. We cannot create, but if we husband the life we have, the Lord of Life will grant us a richer growth. He does not yield the fruit to the spiritually indolent. The garden of the church must be well tilled, or weeds will choke the soil.

To this extent, we believe that what is variously described as “system,” “organisation,” and “preparation,” is not merely desirable, but vital to the continued spiritual health of our Society. We can never lay too great a stress upon the life of God in the “central depth” of the soul as the true source of power, and the foundation of church fellowship, but that is no reason why we should minimise the place of the husbandman in the church.

We are much concerned lest, in the recoil from a too exclusive dependence on organisation and machinery, a tendency to neglect the essential laws of life should again be developed. Much of our weakness may be traced to such a neglect in the past.

Doubtless, the primary cause of any shortcomings must be the want of spiritual power, but under what conditions has that spiritual power been lost? Even spiritual power may be dissipated, and it is a grievous fallacy to imagine that a church can continue to flourish independent of certain human conditions. It is unpractical and unwise to disregard the close reaction of life and environment. Is it not obvious

that a society, constantly renewed by birth, and more largely by admission, requires the proper application of those influences which make for the continuance of spiritual life? We should never regard want of system as the hall mark of spiritual religion.

It is because spiritual experience is a thing so intangible and of so delicate an aroma that many decry an approach to ordered arrangement. And the objection holds where artificial restriction or mere mechanism are in question. It is one thing to advocate restriction, it is quite another to advocate the highest possible standard of religious knowledge throughout a society in which a free ministry is maintained.

As we were forcibly reminded at the last Summer School, restriction of the vocal ministry in the early Church led to disastrous consequences. That restriction Rendel Harris has admirably described as "the old Catholic error . . . it was at once the triumph of the Church and its spiritual ruin. It made the bishop and it slew the prophet." But this restriction was not unconnected with disorders which turned liberty into licence. The lesson taught by the history of the early Church has two aspects,—it may serve as a warning against any attempt at restriction which Friends both here and in America may well ponder, but it also teaches us that, even in such a time of spiritual awakening as that which witnessed the dawn of the Christian era, it is dangerous to rely upon untutored freedom. If liberty is to be with power, it must be cherished by those who know the discipline of mental and spiritual training. Fervent zeal must be tempered by knowledge, and warmth of heart must be



supplemented by intellect that is under the dominance of truth.

To promote an intelligent knowledge of the Bible, to encourage a large acquaintance with the lessons of church history and of Christian experience, to indicate for our own generation the lines of service which these suggest, is not to hinder, but rather to favour the unfolding of the spiritual blossom in the heart.

No attempt is now made to take note of all the strong and subtle influences which are brought to bear in the contact of soul with soul. Nor is it pretended that the means suggested are adequate to cover the whole ground. While indispensable, they must remain subordinate, and it is only their neglect which compels us to lay what seems undue emphasis upon them.

Assuming that the question of "preparation" is no longer a difficulty, it is needful, in discussing the problem of a free ministry, to be on the alert against the dangers that attend every reform. If by restriction the early Church slew the prophet and made the bishop, we must be careful that we do not by learning slay the prophet and make the Rabbi. We feel great unity with the late Professor Bruce when he tells us\* that

"the bane to be dreaded by churches not sacramentarian in tendency is a *rabbimized pulpit*, offering the people scholastic dogmas or philosophic ideas in place of the gospel."

"Religious teachers," he says, "ought to know theology and to be deep, earnest thinkers, but in the *concio ad populum* the prophet should be more prominent than the theologian,

\* In "St. Paul's Conception of Christianity."



and the poet than the philosopher. . . . Learning may kill enthusiasm, and transform the prophet into a Rabbi. That will mean the decay of the evangelic spirit and a lapse into legalism."

These are wise words, and they come with more weight from one who maintained that it was "*a question of grave concern*" for all churches, whether a "systematically trained class of professional preachers" could be a legitimate development out of the evangelism of the early Church.

Having boldly stated this doubt, so suggestive to a Friend, and having faced the real danger of learning, the Professor, speaking of a "learned ministry," nevertheless says,

"My sympathies are very strongly with the advocates of a learned ministry. In my view what we have to complain of is not that the churches have adopted this as their ideal, but that the ministry turned out of their theological seminaries can only by courtesy be described as learned. What we need is not less learning, but a great deal more, and of the right sort."

Are not Friends, with their spiritual conception of worship and their practical recognition of the common priesthood of all believers, naturally marked out to provide that "learning of the right sort," which shall not foster Rabbinism, but nurture the prophets? The phrase "a learned ministry" is unsatisfactory, for it suggests the Rabbinism against which Dr. Bruce inveighs; but we sorely need that kind of learning which he supports, a learning which does not concern itself with mint, anise and cummin, but with the weightier matters of the law,—which implies a knowledge of the conditions of progress, and a strong spiritual

and intellectual grasp upon the fundamental principles of the higher life.

But the need is for our Society as a whole. We cannot portion off a favoured group, and say that these shall have an equipment specially designed for the ministry in which they are to serve ; we must make the basis of our education as wide as the Church. That education may be well adapted to provide a needed equipment in the service of the vocal ministry, but this cannot and must not be its sole aim. Its aim must be nothing less than that of raising the whole standard of efficiency throughout the Church. In practice, those who feel a call to the service of our meetings for worship will perhaps be more ready to take advantage of any privileges which the Church has to offer, but we must not make this our particular concern.

It is easy to see that while we must guard against the danger of Rabbinism, the conditions of our church life protect us so long as we remain faithful to our principle of absolute freedom in the ministry. The establishment of Quaker Sunday Schools, of preparation classes for teachers, of permanent Bible Schools, or of occasional Summer Schools, and the provision of special teaching in our Boarding Schools, and of teachers properly equipped for the purpose, do not necessarily endanger this essential freedom. The very breadth of their scope is their safeguard. Moreover, however much we may avail ourselves of the service of qualified teachers and lecturers (as we have already done to advantage in our Summer Schools), the constitution of our Society makes it necessary that the work of the Church shall be carried on by the voluntary service

of men and women who are more or less dependent for their livelihood upon some profession or business. This close touch with the everyday affairs of life in itself provides us with a notable and effective antidote to Rabbinism.

But there is a danger, more serious because less obvious. It is the danger that fear may induce us to do nothing at all. The striking development of the Pastoral System among American Friends is no doubt responsible for much of the wide-spread fear and caution which exists in our Yearly Meeting. The present writer has enjoyed exceptional opportunities for studying the Pastoral System, and that study has made a deep impression upon him. It became abundantly clear, in the course of a careful inquiry, that the root cause of this new development was the failure of the ministry under the old order. It is merely begging the question to assert that this failure was in its turn due to the decline of spiritual power. That is of course true, but it is also true that spiritual life languishes where it is not properly cherished. Scarcely any direct means, and often no means whatever, were taken to secure proper qualification and equipment for the ministry. The divine gift was regarded as being independent of human conditions, and the Church suffered the inevitable nemesis of decay. Few Friends realise how complete that nemesis has been. The system, which may now be studied in all the stages of its development, has overrun the Western Yearly Meetings and has made large inroads into the conservative Quakerism of the East. This is not the place for criticism ; indeed, we have no sympathy with that

policy of criticism which English Friends have sometimes unhappily pursued. But we feel bound to state clearly that this development is to us a matter of the gravest concern, and that after the most careful investigation we believe it involves the increasing departure, more or less conscious, from our fundamental conception of worship. The point of importance for us is this: the Pastoral System, whether we approve it or no, was established as a consequence of previous failure. Our surest defence against invasion by any such system is to maintain our ideal of fellowship and worship not as a mere tradition, but with life and power.

The great interest aroused in the Yearly Meeting of 1899 by the Minutes of two Quarterly Meetings, and expressed in the weighty letter of advice upon worship and ministry, must not be allowed to die out before some practical measures have been taken. We have on the one hand the call from without to meet the needs of an unspiritual age, and to combat the insidious evil which masquerades as "Imperialism," and upon the other the call from within so to establish our Church upon the rock of our ideal, that service may be without fear.

If we have now cleared the ground for the consideration of our proposals, let us again emphasise the thought that a free ministry cannot be considered apart from the life of the fellowship. The suggestion of a Bible School does not relate to the vocal ministry as an entity by itself, but relates to it only as a part of the whole ministry of the Church. It may, indeed, assist us to understand the place the school is intended to



fill if we put the thought of the vocal ministry out of our minds altogether, and consider the "school" in relation to the larger problems.

The modern Paganism, which not only cries in our streets, but utters its voice in our pulpits ; which is not only indigenous in the clubs of Pall Mall, but bares its head in a Quaker meeting, suggests something of the terrible misconception which now, as in the time of Christ, surrounds the teaching of the Kingdom. We have but to inquire among our own people to discover the looseness of thought and the dimness of vision which in every church is sapping the vitality of ancient testimonies and destroying the community of service. If the glory of citizenship is to be preserved, our people must be nurtured in quietness and in the things of God.

We have in previous essays discussed the needs of our young people, it remains for us to consider the means of equipment which should be available for those of mature age.

What is suggested is, in effect, a Way-side Inn, a place where the dusty traveller, stepping aside for a moment from the thronged highway, shall find refreshment and repose. Its outlines have already been sketched in the first essay of this group but they may be briefly recapitulated.

It is proposed that a permanent Bible School—not a Theological College—be established, open to any person of either sex, above, say, eighteen years of age. While the curriculum would probably be of special value to those who feel called to serve as teachers or as ministers of the gospel, it would only be so because



it aimed at placing pointedly before Friends "the practical, spiritual and non-sacerdotal aspects of divine truth, in relation to individual and national life."

Three main divisions of study suggest themselves *inter alia* :—

Biblical Study.

General Church History.

Quaker Church History.\*

To quote from a previous essay: † "These subjects would be handled with the definite intention of giving clearness and force to our spiritual message. The mistake of most theological teaching lies in the fact that truth is conceived as a crystal and not as a seed. To teach general Church History (which, of course, includes the history of our Society) side by side with its spiritual meaning is to avoid this error."

Facilities would be afforded to those whose means and leisure are limited. No fixed term of study would be insisted upon; Friends would be encouraged to make use of the School whenever opportunity offered; whether for a period of weeks or months. Some would only attend to receive advice which would start them along lines of fruitful study at home. Much assistance could probably be given by means of correspondence classes.

Such is a bald statement of an idea that is capable of considerable expansion and enrichment in detail. At present such a settlement would be most likely to prosper at some favoured resort, which those in search

\* Courses of Lectures might with advantage be added upon the Mystics and upon the economic aspects of the stewardship of wealth.

† *Present Day Papers*, Sept., 1899. "The Problem of a Free Ministry."

of health and rest might find it easy to visit. The beginning would be on a small scale—a dwelling-house fitted up with a library would probably satisfy the modest wants of our Way-side Inn. Two or three “well-concerned” and qualified Friends would be appointed as teachers and guides, and we are not without scholars of the true spirit for our purpose.

It is important that such a place should not be regarded as merely another privilege of the rich. Local funds in the different Quarterly Meetings could, without objection, be raised to enable any Friend of limited means to avail himself of this opportunity for study; such assistance ceasing, of course, when the Friend returned to his ordinary occupation. Thus the school might offer a partial solution to the difficulties encountered by the “convinced Friend” who feels himself but imperfectly acquainted with the historical conditions of our Society.

Advantage would be undoubtedly derived from attaching a “social wing” to this settlement, an outlet for practical Christianity. There could be no better check than this upon the would-be Rabbi.

The numbers in attendance might not at first be large, and in any case it would probably be desirable only to remain in session for a portion of the year. The teachers, after needful rest, would be profitably employed in study, or in lecturing in the meetings and schools of the Society. The settlement would serve as a permanent centre for the Summer School movement, and it would be comparatively easy to organise holiday camps and reading circles in different parts of the country. Indeed, a temporary school, less costly

and elaborate than our two Summer Schools, say of Quarterly Meeting dimensions only, could from time to time be arranged, thus giving the work of the settlement a root in many localities.

Probably those to whom such a settlement would most appeal are young people just beginning life, who have not yet committed themselves deeply in affairs ; artisans, assisted to the advantages of study, hitherto denied them ; and older Friends, workers in every field, who, having " given out " their message, feel that they stand in need of mental and spiritual recuperation.

Of course our scheme teems with practical difficulties. Common sense will maintain that the rush of business life does not permit of such things. In very many cases this will be perfectly true ; but if it is generally true, what a flood of light such an admission lets in upon our condition.

Is there to be no longer any scope for the spirit which abandons the commercial successes within reach, for the advantages of quiet thought and of spiritual contemplation ? We may as well recognise at the outset that there is no way of bracing ourselves to do the work of the Church and at the same time of evading the necessity of self-denial. Friends have adopted a view of life which forbids their entire devotion to the pursuit of commerce. We will not have our worship done by proxy, but what if we will not bear the exercise of the Spirit ? Christianity is founded upon the principle that he who seeks his life must lose it, and no church can prosper which denies in practice the teaching of her Lord.

But if at first the numbers are not large, there need not be a lack of students. Such a settlement would offer an invaluable training for the teachers in our Boarding Schools, and meet the serious deficiency in their Biblical instruction. Here, too, the teachers for the preparatory classes advocated in the last essay might receive their mental equipment, if indeed special teachers, as apart from those in our Boarding Schools are found to be necessary. Finally, the workers in the Home and Foreign Mission Field might with advantage enjoy the privileges of such an institution. We are not here concerned with the question of "paid workers," but as long as we maintain them we shall gain by placing the privileges of a settlement within their reach. Friends who dread the development of the Pastoral System need not fear for the association of paid with voluntary workers. The less the Home Mission worker is treated as belonging to a separate class, the better. The work of Home Missions, quite apart from the question of any special organisation or of payment, must remain exceedingly difficult. A sharp distinction needs to be drawn between a Quaker and an ordinary Nonconformist Mission. In the one it is necessary to present an unusual view of worship and a severe standard of religious life, carrying with it the fullest responsibilities of church fellowship, in the other the difficulty of full responsibility is met by the establishment of a pastor. Clearly the equipment of a Quaker missionary is no ordinary one; whether at home or abroad it involves not only a definite call, but a clear comprehension of the spiritual message of the Church.



A genuine objection may be raised against such a scheme that a class, represented by the students at the school, will be formed within the Society. We believe that upon examination this fear will be seen to be groundless. That some Friends will receive advantages denied to others by the circumstances of life, is inevitable ; but it is no new thing. Friends who have received inspiration and help from the quiet study and the spiritual fellowship enjoyed in the settlement will undoubtedly be distributed throughout the country, but if this be to "create a separate class" we may set our fears at rest.

Again, it is urged that the founders of the school may have excellent motives, but that these may be disregarded by a subsequent generation, which will change the open settlement into a college of pastors. We believe this fear to be equally groundless. The idea of a free Quaker settlement does not even hint at restriction in the ministry. Nothing could bring about such a change as is suggested save a widespread dissatisfaction with existing conditions, such as that which prepared the way for the Pastoral System in America. But one of the special provinces of the school will be to bring out into clear relief the lessons of our spiritual experience as a church, and it is difficult to see how a closer acquaintance with the past should involve us in a revolution so alien to its clearest teaching. Indeed, the settlement will be founded to meet the very shortcomings which may otherwise lead us, in despair, to adopt methods fatal to spiritual freedom. There is far more danger in the present situation, and in the policy of the *status quo*, than can



by the most lively imagination be attributed to such a Friends' Bible School as we have suggested.

In the noisy rush of modern life we need periods of quiet when the soul may feed in peace on that which shall nourish it for action. We need that type of character which, in earlier days, by its calm strength, its transparent truthfulness, and its spiritual depth, worked as a leaven of righteousness in the land. Neither a sound education, nor Quaker Sunday Schools, nor a settlement for Bible study can give us all this, but they will contribute to "an intelligent grasp of Christian truth, and the large shaping of Christian character in the mould of a strong manhood and womanhood."

## SUMMER SCHOOLS.

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### INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

In strict order of time the plea for Summer Schools should precede the plea for a permanent Settlement as the Schools were the first in the field. In reality the two were always associated together in the writer's mind as component parts of a whole.

The tersest and ripest introduction to the subject may be found in the extract here given from a letter John Wilhelm Rowntree wrote to Dr. George Barton, of Haverford, regretting his inability to be present at the Haverford Summer School, 1904. The essay which follows the extract appeared in *Present Day Papers* in 1902.

### EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO DR. GEORGE BARTON.

Scalby,

June 6th, 1904.

The need for a deep and more intelligent apprehension of the vital aspects of religious belief, has never been greater than the present.

One cannot but deplore, at a time like this, when men are feeling their way from a sacerdotal and professional religion to a simpler and more inward faith, that the Society of Friends should be so feeble, not only in numbers, but in spiritual and intellectual power.

It is my conviction that, in the lifetime of this and the succeeding generation, the whole problem of church-fellowship will be before the Christian Church in a new and more imperative form, and that questions of belief, profound and far-reaching, will press more urgently upon us than at any time since the early days of the Christian Church.

We hardly yet see the issue of the great social movement about us, nor do we, within the fold, realise the magnitude of the effort that will be necessary to win civilisation to the faith of Christ. But we *can* see that the current forms and conceptions are as old bottles that cannot hold the new wine, and that it is the duty of those who are concerned to give life its true value and direction, to seek a baptism of divine knowledge and love bravely to face the contemporary conditions and needs, for which the occasion calls.

Again and again the history of the Church has repeated the experience of Paul with the church at Jerusalem, both in questions of organisation and of the expression of Christian truth.

We surely are not of the church of Jerusalem. Like Paul, let us have faith to enlarge our borders, let us expect a spiritual Parousia, and like the writer on the Isle of Patmos, amid the darkness and gloom of contrary times, say with all the earnestness of the longing soul, "Amen, Lord Jesus, come."

## THE NEED FOR THE SUMMER SCHOOL MOVEMENT.

AS we write, the Friends' Summer School is in session upon the shores of Windermere. It is a gathering of work-a-day "laymen," who seek to unite physical recreation with Biblical and religious study.

Those who dispense with a trained and separated ministry may well be expected to devote not a little of their leisure and energy to the subjects which the programme of this Summer School includes. Indeed, it is one of the extraordinary facts of Quaker history that the responsibility of a Free Ministry has been undertaken without any properly sustained recognition of the intellectual qualifications for a searching ministry.

Friends have been more ready to recognise the direct spiritual needs of the minister, than the place and importance of his mental equipment. They have set emphasis upon the fact that the Truth is most compelling when the Spirit speaks through human character. And, of course, such emphasis is not misplaced.

A message, however true, whether delivered from a "ministers' gallery," or a pulpit, must fail unless it expresses some reality in the spiritual life of the speaker. When a man fires at a mark with blank cartridge, there will be smoke and noise, but nothing

will be hit ; and it is firing with blank cartridge to preach a sermon without experience.

If we forget this we ignore the true root of ministry, but we must not also forget that an informed mind and an intelligent outlook are conditions of power. The weakness of the Quaker ministry, which, in spite of all its peculiar qualities, must be confessed, its comparative failure notwithstanding the unique opportunities which the times and message afford, has in part been consequent upon the neglect of the human conditions of spiritual life.

For the Society of Friends the Summer School Movement may mean much. It may mean a quickened sense of responsibility, a firmer grasp upon the essentials of Truth and a renewal of spiritual power.

But the need for Summer Schools is surely not confined to Friends, it extends rather throughout the Church.

In the special training for the ministry the standard though lower in some denominations than in others, is gradually being raised. In the meantime, among laymen, progress in Biblical and in kindred knowledge is slow. The Sunday School is, on the whole, miserably inefficient. It is taught by persons often of exemplary character, but seldom of adequate equipment, and there is a real danger lest the growing effectiveness of the preacher's training should actually widen the gulf between the pulpit and the pew, through the want of correspondence in interest and knowledge between the minister and the congregation.

Biblical scholars practically live in a world by themselves. They are an international con-fraternity,



with their special lingo and their expert's knowledge. They are intimate with the evidence for and against particular views of Biblical interpretation. The main outlines and the basal principles of criticism, its purpose, methods, and its broad results, are the A.B.C. of their craft.

To an inadequate but increasing extent the pulpit understands and appreciates them. Not so the ordinary layman. Take a common type! Immersed in affairs, he borrows his ideas on religion at second hand. He has not time to work them out for himself. He is satisfied with some hereditary heirloom, say of the fifties, when criticism was not, or with the *obiter dicta* of his spiritual adviser, whom he regards as endowed in a miraculous degree with infallibility. Even if he do not go so far, he is not without a certain respect for the Bible, not unmixed with superstition it is true, and marked by a woful ignorance as to its real teaching and significance. Is it not, for instance, on the Bible that he takes his oath?

His "religious things" must be done or expressed in an accustomed way or his religious proprieties are apt to be shocked. His reverence for these, which we fear is largely conventional, attributes a peculiar sacredness to those observances for which silk hats and frock-coats are the correct wear.

In his mind, the British constitution, the Bible, the national flag, are hopelessly confused as being equally the private properties of the Anglo-Saxon, and this reverence for sacred things is intertwined with a species of patriotism which is, moreover, not seldom tinged with a party-political bias. To him,

God is primarily the national, or British God, and he recognises that he must propitiate Him, especially on Sundays, if his private affairs and those of the nation are to prosper ; otherwise it can scarcely be said that his " religion " has any very direct bearing upon his conduct.

Or take another type, likewise frequently met with, perhaps more frequently as time goes on. He is conscious that something is happening. He believes that the orthodox people have been " smashed," that the story of Jonah and the whale is " done for," and that the Bible is no longer a book that need be regarded. He does not trouble to inquire exactly what has been going on, he only discovers that whereas he never believed these things to be true, he is now sure that they are not, and free from the irksome necessity of supporting the boredom of being religious, he wears flannels on Sunday, " does the river," or " motes," and passes for an honest man without pretence, who believes in being straight, and kind " and all that," but brushes what he calls religion aside.

Two other leading types shall take us through our list. First the man nourished in the Evangelical theology of fifty years ago, and strong upon Old Testament types ; who regards all criticism as sin, either fails or refuses to understand the critics, and often suffers real anguish of heart when he witnesses what he regards as the defection of the elect. And secondly, the man who has read every book in German criticism from Strauss downward, has saturated himself with Evolution, read Herbert Spencer, Huxley, has dabbled in comparative religion, and made ac-

quaintance with the philosophers, from Aristotle and Plato, to Hegel and Kant. He regards the Christian minister with aversion as one who shirks real issues; he attends church frankly disbelieving, to soothe his orthodox friends, but assails the claim of Revelation with unflagging energy. To him a system of ethics is all sufficient. Evil is only good in the becoming, and while his standard of life and his practice are often exceedingly high, he feels no reality in prayer, no sense of dependence, and claims at any rate, contentment in his belief that God is unknowable.

As yet but few understand how great a work Biblical scholarship is accomplishing. The place, even in comparative religion, of the prophets of the eighth century, B.C., the significance of their message, not only in the revised historical setting which has been given to it, but in relation to the principles which govern the conduct and relationships of modern individuals and nations, receives scant appreciation. Yet we shall scarcely exceed the truth in asserting that the critics have discovered the prophets, setting them forward for the first time in their true light.

At least, it is certain that they have freed Christian ethics from Old Testament bondage, by compelling attention to the fallacy of verbal inspiration, and disclosing the internal evidence of a moral development, within the limits of the Old Testament itself.

They have saved us from the fantastic vagaries of the text hunter, who skipped from verse to verse in happy disregard of all laws of exegesis, and almost of common sense, they have turned the shaft of ridicule by separating history from drama and legend and

allegory, and by uncovering the processes of compilation have given a sense of reality and of human interest to much that was merely dull and unintelligible.

But more than all, they have thrown a flood of light upon the life and times of Jesus, and have drawn attention from the elaborate scholasticism of the creed-makers to the vital throbbing truths which seemed in danger of being obscured. Difficulties have indeed been emphasised or brought to light both in the Old Testament and in the New, which yet remain unsolved. Enough has, however, been done to quicken faith and to vindicate the work of the critics as the greatest and most potential reformation since the first centuries of the Christian era.

The Bible was loosening its hold through our ignorance and mis-interpretation. To the mass of men it is already an unreal book. It is the much maligned critic who is restoring both its reality and its power. Yet the work is only begun. The mistakes of orthodoxy still bear their fruit, and on the other hand as even the critics are fallible, there is room, with growing light, for much correction and revision.

As this process develops, the ferment in religious thought must become more general, a ferment, however, not of dissolution, but of stirring life. We err when we deprecate criticism on the ground that it disturbs faith. The faith of the majority will be saved or quickened only by compelling thought and fearlessly seeking the truth.

To defend Genesis as a scientific text book is to manufacture doubt. The day when quibbles could pass for apologetics is gone. The churches lose in-



fluence for want of candour and courage. It is a grave thing when the truth must be sought outside the pulpit, and when compromise and hesitancy marks the utterances of divines.

We may keep out the waves for a little time with walls of sand, but a rising tide has an inexorable force, and our castle must be levelled at last. Yet after all it is only the sand castles that will disappear ; what is living rock will remain. For in the long run criticism is constructive, and we shall yet come to welcome it as another generation welcomed the "New Learning."

To break the indifference of a pleasure-loving age, to quicken a deeper sense of life's solemn purpose, to bring home, with freshness and power the practical aspects of the Christian faith, to supplant militarism with brotherhood, self aggrandisement with self-sacrifice, hate with love, the wars of commerce and of race with the holy peace of God, these must sooner or later fuse in an overmastering passion in those who, piercing the misinterpretation of centuries, find themselves face to face with the living Christ. And because Christ is behind the Gospels, it is to him inevitably that criticism will lead. In the meantime we must busy ourselves with re-adjustment.

Science has much to tell us as well as much to learn. We need a wider and more comprehensive sweep in the range of our thought. Specialism has its necessary place, but it tends to narrowness. The scientist often dogmatizes in religion with an imperfect apprehension of spiritual truth, brushing aside the facts of spiritual experience with unintelligent contempt ;



on the other hand the theologian and the philosopher are prone to profitless abstractions without a due regard for concrete facts. Science, philosophy, theology, need a closer inter-relation and greater mutual respect.

Moreover, in examining afresh the claims of the Christian revelation a different estimate of other religions will be necessary. Even Biblical criticism may be too narrow. A study of comparative religion may (we believe it will), justify the supreme claims of the Christian faith. But it will certainly teach us that the work of the Holy Spirit has been more universal than we thought, and bring us into closer sympathy, with our brothers of the human race.

The work of criticism and of re-examination is, indeed, the re-conquest as a living possession of that which, accepted merely as an hereditary bequest, must remain an impotent gift. In the Society of Friends, hereditary testimonies are only too apt to become sterile. We should not deprecate, but encourage fresh thought. Our testimony against war, our views of the Lord's Supper, and so forth need to be thought out by this generation in relation to the progress of ideas and the changed environment of a modern world. It may well be that in essence the testimonies will remain, but we shall gain at least the living expression of what we have made our own.

To this end, and in view of the widespread indifference and misunderstanding which calls aloud for the teacher and the prophet, we earnestly support the aim and work of the Summer Schools as the work of the modern reformation, and the promise of fuller spiritual life.

## ADULT SCHOOLS AND MISSION WORK.

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John Wilhelm Rowntree threw himself with great earnestness into Adult School work, and spared no pains to inform and to inspire the men with whom he met.

He regarded the Adult School movement as a means to an end. The end being the advancement of Christ's kingdom amongst men. He never dissociated it from his conception of the work of the section of the Church with which he so closely identified himself.

The following address was given at the annual breakfast meeting of the Bedford Institute, held at Peel, 23rd May, 1896, and was afterwards published in the *Friend* (19th June, 1896).



OUR ADULT SCHOOLS AND MISSION WORK,  
AND THEIR  
RELATION TO THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

AT the outset let me frankly admit that in approaching the many-sided problem suggested by the title of this paper, I am not going to make a novel contribution towards its solution. If I deal largely in commonplace, and by deliberate choice repeat an oft-told tale, my excuse must be that though in conference after conference we have come to close quarters with this problem, we have hitherto shirked it in practice.

There is a delicate warfare to which most men are not altogether strangers, where persistence in a certain urgent appeal is seldom resented nor often unsuccessful. It is with something of the same hopefulness that I venture to put forward a few thoughts without pretending to be either comprehensive or original.

No one who has studied the report of the Manchester Conference can fail to have noticed the chart which exhibits the comparative growth of the Society of Friends and its First-day Schools. There we note at once, as the striking feature of the diagram, how the gentle, undulating rise, representing our Church

membership, is rudely cut across in 1869 by a sharp incline—at an angle of  $60^{\circ}$ —representing our Adult School membership. Beginning at about sea-level, so to speak, in 1845, this bold mountain rises in abrupt precipices till it loses itself in Himalayan peaks, and in 1895 disappears in the clouds at an elevation of 40,000.

The movement which was thus strikingly indicated will no doubt furnish one of the most interesting chapters in our history. I think I shall not be far wrong if I say that our future historian, contemplating, let us hope, a large and vigorous Church, will point to this period—the period covered by the chart—as the decisive one in the history of our Society. The Adult Schools have been to us not merely a new and successful form of Christian endeavour, but have been of critical importance to us in our development as a church. They have liberated our pent-up energies in a sphere of fruitful service. They have given us new bone and sinew. They have expanded our sympathies and our aims. They have quickened our sense of responsibility, and done not a little to break down our selfish exclusiveness and spiritual pride. The doors of the cloister have been opened, and the recluse of Quietism is becoming once more the Brother of Mercy and the Preaching Friar.

Small wonder that those brought up in an atmosphere of renewed religious and social activity should find new hopes and new faith possessing their souls. For it is impossible to take any part in the work of the Adult Schools without being profoundly impressed with the limitless possibilities that lie before them, if



only the energy and the workers be forthcoming for their development.

Perhaps no church has found a more direct way to the people, and no church has an influence of the same kind lying ready to its hand. Were we a school of the prophets, think of all that our schools might be ! Think how through them we might leaven public opinion, stem the forces of reaction, create a new and a tenderer conscience, and a better love than the greed for gold, and might give to our country strong and God-fearing citizens who would bring Christian principle to bear upon public affairs ! Think what outward results Christianity applied through our schools might achieve ! Public-houses and gambling-dens replaced by lecture-halls and popular places of healthy amusement, slums abolished, and a healthy life made possible for the poorest, and all this not as the substance, but as the outward symbol and the necessary consequence of a purifying and elevating faith in the living Christ.

In the Adult School movement and its allied mission work our church has come upon a vein of gold ; but if we are fully to work the vein, we shall need a large increase in power, for the quartz is obstinate, our miners few, and our machinery inadequate. Were it otherwise, we should not find in the paper which follows the description of the diagram, the ever-recurring question, " Why is it that with so large a number of persons directly associated with us in our Adult Schools and mission meetings, so very few, comparatively, find their way into full membership with us ? " And we should not read that this " com-

paratively few " is less than one per cent. of the number of our scholars. This question has been asked again and again and yet again ; and while, undoubtedly, there are signs that our evangelistic work is increasing our membership, the problem in its broad aspect remains unsolved.

Church and school do not grow in equal proportion, and unless by the growth of the church we can supply fresh workers, we must inevitably, of physical necessity, come to the limit of our power. Moreover, a church which would extend its influence must draw its educated men and women into its service. Intellectual development ought to lead, not to fastidious aloofness, but to the most earnest and powerful advocacy of all that makes for the highest life. Educated men and women of this stamp it ought to be the function of our church to supply. When the vision of the Kingdom—the wall and towers of the Eternal City—shine before us in a glory of prophetic light, we feel how great is the work, and the labourers how feeble and few.

It is the meeting for worship that ought to be our recruiting-ground, and if church and school and church and mission are to grow together, the same devotion, the same freedom, the same business-like application, the same spiritual power that have created the adult class and filled the mission hall must be brought to our meetings for worship. If a larger share of the energy and life of our church be given to our own meetings, the schools will not suffer, but gain.

To this end, we may, I believe, fruitfully direct our earnest thought in three main directions, viz.,

*Outward Arrangements, Social Life, and Spiritual Power.* We must look to the practical reforms, larger or smaller, which a timid and sometimes self-regarding conservatism has hitherto prevented. We must give a larger place to the social side of Christian life. We must earnestly seek that spiritual power without which all outward energy must fail of its highest results. Any one of these three headings, all so closely allied with the future of our aggressive work, would form an adequate subject for a far longer paper than the present. I propose only to make a few suggestions under each head.

*Reforms in Arrangements.*

In the first place, as to Reforms in Arrangements, I know of no instance more typical of unwise conservatism in usage than the tenacity with which we cling to the practice of breaking up our families at meeting time. In itself it is a small matter, but if at Manchester speaker after speaker emphasised the difficulty of getting the outside public to unite with us in our worship, why increase that difficulty by placing this needless barrier in the way? I remember once asking an intelligent adult scholar, who was often my companion in class-visiting, what he took to be the *raison-d'être* of the Society of Friends. He thought for a moment, and replied, "Well, I suppose you don't sing, and you separate your men and women in meeting." What noble tenets with which to conquer the world! If we would discuss these and similar matters, not from the point of view of our own comfort, and of what *we* have been used to, but from the

standpoint of outsiders, surely this senseless anomaly would no longer survive.

I have introduced this detail because it is typical of larger questions of reform to which there is the same attitude of a dull and complacent conservatism. Not long ago, in passing down the Tyne, I commented on the number of steamers which were laid aside, and inquired if this were due to depression of trade. The reply was, "No, their engines and boilers are out of date, and it pays the owners to lay the ships aside, and use the modern type which give a higher speed and a less consumption of coal. If the hulls are good, it may sometimes pay to refit them. Otherwise, *not*." I fancy that we Friends have a considerable stock of machinery which, excellent in its day, is now antiquated, rusty and creaking. Yet ours is a vessel shaped by master-builders, and we need not cast her aside; but if we are to compete with modern liners we must refit her with the best engines and boilers we can secure. If I am asked to be explicit, and to point out a piece of rusty machinery, I fear I must first—though with all deference—point to our Meetings on Ministry and Oversight, and, as an excuse, shall quote the story which has been told before, how a Friend was once asked whether he were a member of the Meeting on Ministry and Oversight, and on giving a negative answer was addressed as follows: "I should have thought thou was old enough, and rich enough, and dry enough, to be a member of that Meeting!"

Surely there is practical work for our inner councils of war—such as our Meetings on Ministry and



Oversight ought to be. May we not look to them to stimulate and direct the aggressive work of the church, to organise special meetings and visits, and in many ways to promote amongst us a livelier spirit ?

And, again, is there not creaking and rust in our Preparative and Monthly Meetings ? In some places the Preparative Meetings are becoming more and more real Church meetings, and are held on a week-day evening, when the congregation is not for ever craning round at the clock, and wondering if their dinners are getting cold. Why should not agenda-papers and whips be employed to secure interested and adequate attendance ? Why should not a paper be read now and again at Preparative or Monthly Meetings, on some definite and important subject, either concerning the church, or its relation to some local or national question ? In short, why not in our business meetings take the same pains to make them effective and interesting, and to secure good attendance, that we take with our Adult School gatherings ?

So, too, with regard to the arrangements of our Yearly Meeting, I question whether we sufficiently allow for the changes that have come over our Society and English life. We have a large number of members of limited means, and the majority of them are tied down to retail trades, or occupy positions where their time is not their own. Working men cannot, as our arrangements go, share in the deliberations of our legislative assembly, and we do little to secure their attendance and assistance. We profess that all members have equal rights, but we are governed by



those amongst us who are rich enough to pay their own expenses to London.

Wherever our machinery is out of date we must either modify it, or look out for better.

But it is not only in business meetings that we need less formalism and more liberty and life. In our Meetings for Worship our very want of form has hardened into the subtlest of all formalisms. I have often heard the remark "Your meeting is so stiff!" I once pressed two adult scholars, who would have made helpful members, to attend our meeting, with a view to joining it. They were very sympathetic, but no, they wouldn't feel free if they came, we were *too stiff*. And this vague objection was nevertheless sufficiently rooted in their minds to determine their decision.

Our form of worship ought to be the very freest from any charge of stiffness. Why cannot anyone who feels he has some message laid upon his heart, and who wishes to impress it by some passage in a book, be permitted to read what he wishes if his memory is unequal to the call? If we may quote from memory, it is absurd to suppose that Quakerism will collapse if we quote from a book. In some meetings opportunity is given which minimises the necessity for such a quotation. I mean the evening reading, when a carefully prepared paper or address may alternate with a simple Scripture-reading. I have myself benefited so much as a listener at such times, that I wish the practice were far more common among Friends than it is.

Closely allied to these matters, and in relation

with our Adult Schools, and mission-halls, there is another question of real importance, and that is the vexed question of *singing*. As I think of the power for good that may lie in congregational singing, I sometimes wonder whether, as a church, we have not made a grievous mistake in entirely excluding it from our meetings.

I mention this question of singing less on account of its intrinsic importance than as an illustration of necessity for that *freedom* in our ministry and worship, which would remove all reproach of "stiffness." It is, after all, on those periods of silence which vitally distinguish our worship from that of other bodies, that our real freedom of worship ultimately depends.

### *The Social Life of our Church.*

We have spoken of outward arrangements, let us briefly dwell on the social life of our church. One of the few working men who attended the Conference at Manchester said, in reference to his first acquaintance with a Friends' meeting, "I went to that meeting for five months, and only one man and my teacher ever spoke to me. There are two or three elders who have never spoken to me yet. All these things keep people away from your church." These words bring us very near to the main cause of our failure to bring our scholars into membership.

We live too much in family cliques. We fraternise with those whom we think interesting. We are willing to pour out tea at an annual meeting, or to shake hands on a Sunday, and make a few nice remarks

about the weather, but we too often neglect to ask those we meet to our home, where we may come to close quarters with them. Surely the Church of Christ should know no caste, and yet Dr. Fairbairn gives it as his deliberate opinion that social differences are actually accentuated by the modern churches.

Brotherhood must be more than a name. The Apostle John strongly denounced the cant use of this word. Christianity implies stewardship. We are traitors to its first principles if we hold that there can be lawful tenancy of wealth, except as a sacred trust for the service of our fellows. Let us open our houses more freely, and use our gardens or carriages for tired mothers and little children. Let us gather working people around us, not merely in our schools, or at lectures, or public meetings, but at our own fireside, and meet them, not as superior beings, but as members of one family.

There are many ways in which social life in a meeting can be quickened and warmed. We may have the social gathering at the meeting-house (I have known one of the most successful opened by blind-man's buff in the meeting-house yard). We may have bicycle clubs, and reading circles, and so on. But, though all will demand from us more or less of thoughtfulness and self-sacrifice, and though in all we shall be careful to draw out the lonely ones, yet there is nothing that so promotes social life in a meeting as simple, private hospitality.

I fear that our *official* visiting committees do not always systematically arrange for kindly calls at the homes of poorer or invalided Friends. It should

never be that in times of trial any member or attender nominally under the care of a Meeting on Ministry and Oversight should be by oversight debarred from its ministry. At any rate, till the rusty machinery of these meetings is improved, we may have *unofficial* visiting societies, each member of which will take so many on the list of his meeting, and either visit or invite them before the next committee. Indeed, there seems hardly any limit to opportunity if only really interested and sympathetic consideration be given.

“ Well ”—it may be asked—“ What is the bearing of all this on religious work ? What is the connection of all this with Adult Schools and missions ? I believe it is a very real one indeed. Suppose a stranger working man comes to a meeting where this spirit of brotherhood is alive. He does not come his five months without being spoken to by only his teacher and one other friend. He is pounced upon and drawn into the social circle. He feels the glow of a kindly sympathy and interest. He says to himself, “ These people don’t keep their religion to themselves. They don’t just shake hands in the yard and ask me how I am, while they look over my head at the opposite wall and wonder what next to say. They show me at once that they care for me and want me.” Do you think that the present “ gulf between church and school ” would continue if every visit to our meeting by the men we influence were met in this fashion ? Or do you think that the chilly reception which is too often their fate contrasts favourably with the warmth of their Sunday class ?



And further. Which ministry is more likely to be effective—that which is offered by those who have entered into the condition of the people they address, who know their private sorrows and cares, and appreciate the difficulties of individual cases? Which ministry will gain the more sympathetic hearing; which will win the readier entrance to the heart for the message of healing, peace and life?

We have mentioned the ministry, and this brings us to our third and final consideration:—

### *The Need for Spiritual Power.*

I believe it is often the experience of those scholars who come to our meetings, after previously attending their morning class, that they leave the meeting with the feeling that they had more real help in their school, that the teaching there was more direct, more practical, more powerful, more searching than the ministry in the meeting.

Sometimes, no doubt, this is due to the fact that the best energy and thought of the preachers have already been absorbed in the school—that the teacher is also the one on whom the main burden of the meeting is allowed to fall, and that his physical limit has been reached. But sometimes, and oftener, it is due to that strange and fatal misapprehension as to *preparation* and *prearrangement* which lies at the root of so much of failure in our ministry, and which results in many cases in spiritual negligence and in leaving the meeting “to run itself.”

I think that the state of our meetings generally justifies the belief that our greatest outward need



is a ministry—fearless and direct—able to deal with life in its various aspects, and presenting in fresh and modern terms, and with prophetic power, the message of Jesus to the men of to-day. If our meetings were what they ought to be, we should rear among our young men and women a band of preachers not afraid of open-air testimony, but fired once more with apostolic zeal.

Instead of this, we are compelled to review meeting after meeting, where the pulse of spiritual life beats low, where the sense of individual responsibility is weak, and where apparently no young Friend is preparing himself for the inevitable call to the service of the ministry.

We have taken a bold step in declining—almost alone among the Churches—to set up a class of men, trained and paid, to meet our spiritual needs, but we have shown a strange indifference to the responsibility we have thus voluntarily taken upon us. Until we fully appreciate what we lose by the want of an adequate ministry, until the younger generation have felt how great is the responsibility that must in time be laid upon them, and have learned to train their minds and hearts in view of this solemn service, we shall always have one great obstacle to the expansion of our Society.

It is impossible, in this paper, to deal with all the points that suggest themselves in this connection. It is freely allowed that preaching is not everything, that all ministry is not vocal, and that much that is vocal, unpretentious and simple as it may be, comes direct from the heart, and constitutes one of the most

precious privileges we have enjoyed. These things I have taken for granted, and at the risk of appearing one-sided, I have urged other considerations which seem to me to be of immediate and pressing importance.

To review. I think the points we have arrived at are these

That our Church grows at a rate entirely disproportionate to the task it has undertaken.

That though our aggressive work has probably saved us from extinction, it has so taxed the workers that unless their numbers can be increased it must inevitably reach an early limit.

That if we are to extend our services as we have done in the past, we must give more energy, time and thought to our own Church meetings, which are spiritually weak, and have not yet reaped all those benefits that renewed religious activity in the mission-field might have been expected to bring.

That the three chief lines along which we may look for help are :—

- (1) Prompt and practical reforms in our arrangements, coupled with less formality in our method of worship.
- (2) A livelier sense of brotherhood in our social life.
- (3) A deeper sense of responsibility for our ministry, and a new baptism of spiritual power.

This last—the baptism of spiritual power—has been but scantily dealt with, yet plainly it includes

the whole, for it is small use clearing the channel unless there is water to flow through it.

We cannot raise these questions, so vitally concerning the future of our Church, without being humbled and sobered by the sense of our short-comings and the magnitude of our work. But I trust that we shall know also something of the joy of warfare in a noble cause. "When Trowbridge went ashore with the *Culloden*, and was able to take no part in the battle of the Nile, Nelson wrote to the Admiralty, 'The merits of that ship and her gallant captain are too well known to benefit by anything I could say. Her misfortune was great in getting aground, *while her more fortunate companions were in the full tide of happiness.*'"\* It is in that spirit of battle that the knights of Christ must win their spurs.

We have spoken of "mission work." Let us give the word no narrow application. For is not the Society of Friends, as a church, itself a "mission" to the world? We represent the ultimate principle of the Reformation. And in this age of reaction, when the priest seeks once more to bind men with the fetters he has forged, there is the greater need for the Free Churches to set forth the religion of Christ in its essential liberty, spirituality and power. We have our special part in this great work. Let us be faithful in the doing of it.

\* R. L. Stevenson, *Virginibus Pueresque*, p. 191.



## OUR EDUCATIONAL POLICY.

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### INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

In *Present Day Papers* September and October, 1900, there appeared two lengthy essays on the above subject. The first is an historical sketch of the most noteworthy educational efforts of the Friends within their own borders. The first half of the second gives statistical details as to the accommodation, fees, scholarships, endowment, and teaching staff of our Public Boys' Schools. The information so brought together by Henry Bryan Binns, co-editor with John Wilhelm Rowntree, in *Present Day Papers*, is valuable to all who are interested in the matter treated of, and should not be lost sight of by educationalists in the Society. The conclusions given at the close of the second paper are from the pen of John Wilhelm Rowntree, and are reprinted here on that account, and as completing the presentment of his views on this side of the Society's life.





## OUR EDUCATIONAL POLICY.

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“ The Society of Friends ought to exert itself for the right instruction of its youth in literature and science, in connection with religious care.”

*Dr. Fothergill in the original prospectus of Ackworth School ;  
quoted by J. H. Tuke, Education Conference, 1879.*

A SURVEY such as ours is necessarily imperfect, but it may serve to mark the main trend and features of our educational progress. There is evidence in almost every period of much indifference to the need for more adequate equipment, but Friends have rarely been without earnest and effective educationalists. With that genius for thoroughness natural to a Society which by its constitution fosters the sense of individual responsibility, they have promoted schools famed for an admirable blending of sound mental and moral training. Some of our schools have perhaps been but indifferent, and even now fall far short of their proper standard ; but not a few have contributed powerfully to the formation of virile Christian character, and many of the scholars who passed out through their gates have become leaders in progressive social and religious work.

More than a century ago Edmund Burke, looking back to his training under Abraham Shackleton at the little Quaker School of Ballitore, wrote : “ If I am anything, it is the education which I had there that made

me so." And, as John Morley says: "His master's skill as a teacher did not impress him more than the example which was every day set before him of uprightness and simplicity of heart."

This quality of the Quaker school and of the Quaker teacher must ever continue of inestimable value. Though the range and quality of the education in our Public, Grammar and High Schools, and even our Elementary Schools, may be admirable, it is difficult to believe that they can attain to the standard of careful individual training set by the best Quaker schools; while their definite religious teaching must in all remain unsatisfactory or inadequate for Friends. Even where professedly undenominational, the Public, Grammar and High Schools have as a rule a pronounced Anglican bias; while in the compulsory undenominationalism of the Board School, religious teaching becomes necessarily colourless and often mechanical.

We must indeed cherish our schools, not to promote the narrow spirit of sectarianism, but because we desire to see our children develop into strong men and women of rich culture, and possessed with that deep practical and spiritual conception of Christian responsibility which we call Quakerism. It was evidently this sentiment which in the past stirred Friends to provide a careful education for their children, and to include the children of their poor within its scope. Under the widely different conditions of recent years the direct query, "Is due care taken of the education of the offspring of the poor among you?" has been discontinued, and it has almost appeared as though the development of free elementary education was

destined to terminate the long struggle made by the Society to compass the education of all its children.

We have marked the uneasiness with which Friends have contemplated this situation. We have pointed out that a large number of children are growing up, associated with the Society but not trained in its schools.

The Society of Friends is once more a growing church, mainly drawing its recruits from Adult Schools and Mission Meetings, and the question arises, how is the social solidarity and the religious effectiveness of the Society to be maintained, unless all Friends have more or less similar facilities for education and moral training placed within their reach ?

Briefly the problems which emerge from this discussion may be stated thus :—

(A) To adjust and endow our educational system so that it may be opened to the children of all members and associates :

(B) To maintain the educational standard of our schools at a level which shall at least compare favourably with others of a similar class :

(C) To attract the best men and women into the ministry of teaching, and to secure them against penury in old age :

(D) To provide definite historical and Biblical teaching, calculated to interpret the true message and significance of the Society of Friends and to foster a right sense of the responsibility of membership :

(E) To raise central and local funds for the proper and efficient development of our educational equipment.

The problem thus stated has on various occasions received the attention of Friends, but no result at all commensurate with the labour and thought bestowed upon it in recent years has yet been attained. The solution is largely a matter for educational experts, but in order to provoke discussion we venture to put forward the following suggestions :—

(A) *To adjust and endow our educational system that it may be opened to the children of all members and associates.* Under this head may be grouped the following :—

- (1) That the schools be graded and the educational standard in each school be definitely fixed as part of a common plan.\*
- (2) That the need for an executive body with a comprehensive, as opposed to a merely local, outlook upon educational questions, and with some central control and initiative for con-

\* The proper grading of our Schools pre-supposes the adoption by each of a sound and suitable educational standard, which is perhaps best secured by taking certain public examinations. This is hardly the right place, nor if it were would the writers of this article be the proper persons, to discuss the highly technical question of the leaving examination which should be chosen. We may, however, quote from an able and well-qualified correspondent, who has expressed grave doubts as to the value of the College of Preceptors examination now taken, we believe, at most of our Friends' Public Schools. This correspondent describes it as "an examination mostly taken in private schools to satisfy lower middle-class parents," but "not in good repute among the best teachers." That for junior and senior Cambridge local certificates, is said to be better regarded from the educational point of view. London Matriculation has had a bad name among teachers, affording "no sort of test of scholarship either in classics or in English; the mathematics is very elementary, and the 'science' superficial." "All the best girls' High Schools and the best boys' Grammar Schools," continues our correspondent, "take the Oxford and Cambridge joint Board Examination; the lower certificate for boys and girls of 16, and the higher for boys and girls of 18 or 19. It is the examination in best repute as really tending to thorough work, and is accepted as a preliminary both at Oxford and Cambridge."



certed action, should be met by a Central and representative Educational Board with well defined *executive* powers. The School Committees at present existing, to retain local control and responsibility ; the Central Board to concern itself with all matters which affect the common educational policy of the Society.\* This Central Executive Board to report to the Yearly Meeting and to supersede the present advisory Educational Board.

- (3) That an adequate "ladder" of scholarships be constructed and endowed, leading from the Public Day Schools through Friends' Schools to the Universities, open to the children of members and attenders, and to those who have one parent a member.
- (4) That Friends be encouraged to increase the endowments of their schools, and in view of the competition of Free Education to adopt as their policy in "the eight English schools" the lowering of fees and the *ultimate* abolition of differentiated or graduated fees.†

\* The duties of the Educational Board would thus be largely an expansion of their present advisory office. It would, however, have the control of a central fund for assisting schools (vide E, 4). The expert examination, the grading of the schools, the training of the teachers, their scholarships, etc., and the minimum scale of salaries would fall within its scope. Probably all the local committees would be strongly represented along with other members elected by co-option and by the Yearly Meeting. The chief source of power would lie in the administration of the central funds, and its exercise would have the broad effect of securing a coherent system of education throughout the Society and stimulating local committees to maintain the highest educational efficiency.

† In the case of any children neither of whose parents were associated with Friends, full rates, fixed as though there was no endowment, would still, in fairness have to be charged.

(B) *To maintain the educational standard of our schools at a level which shall at least compare favourably with other schools of a similar character.*

Much is at present being done under this head, especially in equipment and building, but the teaching itself is, of course, the fundamental issue.

We would suggest

- (1) That the Central Executive Board appoint a thoroughly qualified and independent examiner who should report annually.
- (2) That the application of the Flounders bequest be again carefully reconsidered, both in relation to the scope and location of the Institute, and possibly to the conversion of the fund into training scholarships.
- (3) That a more liberal scheme of special scholarships be developed and endowed to enable teachers to secure the best Quaker and University training, both in this country and abroad.

(C) *To attract the best men and women into the ministry of teaching and to secure them against penury in old age.*

- (1) That a scale of minimum salaries be drawn up by the Central Educational Board.
- (2) That a fund be started for the augmentation of teachers' salaries, in order that the standard of the profession may be raised, and teachers enabled to provide against old age or failing health.\*

\* We have, perhaps, sufficiently indicated the need for general augmentation. But it should not be merely indiscriminate. It would

- (3) That wherever possible, house-masterships be offered for married teachers.
- (4) That teachers have reasonable leisure and privacy during term time.
- (5) That the Central Education Board provide a registry office for teachers seeking employment either again as teachers or, at the close of their teaching career, in other occupations ; and shall in the latter case take special means for assisting teachers in such inquiries.

(D) *To provide definite historical and Biblical teaching calculated to interpret the true message and significance of the Society of Friends and to foster a right sense of the responsibility of membership.*

So far as the children are concerned we do not add to our suggestions made in the *Present Day Papers* for November, 1899, but with regard to teachers we would propose that among the conditions of some of the training scholarships and fellowships should be included a course of study under this head for a defined period, and suitable provision for this should be made, either at the Flounders Institute†

be conditioned by efficiency and as already suggested should encourage insurance against old age, etc. Local committees should be enabled to pay liberal salaries apart from any special augmentation, and such augmentation, say, by the Central Board would proceed upon definite lines, *i.e.*, by a system of fellowships for high merit, and by some system of assisted insurance.

† Some tentative arrangements are already in force which are intended in part to supply on Sundays the definite teaching upon religious subjects for which there is now no room in the week-day curriculum. We should, however, like to see further opportunities of a more thorough and definite character provided under the training scholarships or fellowships suggested.

or elsewhere (vide *Present Day Papers*, December, 1899, p. 18).

(E) *To raise central and local funds for the proper and efficient development of our educational equipment.\**

While we gladly recognise the efforts of our Central Education Board to raise a fund of £25,000 for this purpose, we venture to make the following additional suggestions :—

- (1) That the Yearly Meeting appoint a committee to lay before individual meetings the serious nature of our educational responsibilities, and to solicit bequests (whether at death or in the form of annuities) and subscriptions, etc.
- (2) That Friends be periodically reminded of the importance of remembering the educational needs of the Society in their bequests, either by the addition of a clause to Query XI. or to the General Advices,—or again, through the committees of advice “on outward affairs and wills.”
- (3) That for the sake of a simpler and more uniform administration, any funds now existing for the reduction of fees should, wherever possible, be amalgamated into a central fund for that purpose.

\* The financial needs of our educational system may seem relatively large, but when we consider the small total number of children with whom we have to deal, they ought to be easily met. Wealthy Friends of America have recognised the importance of special education, but hitherto English Friends in a similar position have been comparatively indifferent. Six or seven English Friends of means could, if they chose, set the whole system on a basis of adequate endowment and thus render the Society an incalculable and lasting service.



- (4) That the Yearly Meeting invite each Quarterly Meeting to raise funds annually for the purposes of the Central Educational Board. Grants by the Central Board to local committees could only be made on the recommendation of the examiner, and on condition that they be applied for strictly educational purposes, in a manner approved by him, or by the Board.

Whatever opinion may be expressed upon these proposals we feel clear that the need for action has not been exaggerated. Thoughtful consideration of the conditions of healthy church life emphasises the supreme importance of a thorough Quaker education for our young people. How to deal with the large numbers of children we do not educate, how to give all our children definite religious teaching, and how to meet the difficulty of old age or superannuation which is, perhaps, the kernel of the teacher's problem, are questions to the solution of which we must address ourselves seriously. The problem of the children is a problem of our future as a church ; security for old age is the condition upon which must depend the continuance of a line of qualified Quaker teachers.

Whatever our position in the past, we are no longer in the van of Educational reform. We have none the less a mission in our schools. We must set before ourselves a standard higher than that commonly attained, a conception of education as qualifying for larger responsibilities than those of business, pleasure, or even politics. Few are better qualified than Friends, whether by constitution, experience, or character,



fitly to blend the intellectual, spiritual, and physical training of the child, and to educate for a liberal citizenship its unformed mind.

We cannot express our closing thought better than in the following passage which we quote from an American onlooker, interested in the Schools of Friends :—"What I fear most of all is that you are getting to think that your mission in Education is not so pressing as it was a century ago. I believe that it is more so. To be sure, the public schools are good ; but where are we to get the models for the public schools ? No great progress in Education has come about through public systems ; the leaders must always be infused with a spirit above the needs of petty politics or social expediency."\*

\* *Friends' Intelligencer*, March 3rd, 1894.

## A STUDY IN ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY.

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### INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

John Wilhelm Rowntree's zeal for the spread of a strong lay spiritual Christianity extended to both sides of the Atlantic. In the course of several visits to the United States, he studied the history and present conditions of the various Quaker communities there, with much care. He made many friendships which he greatly prized, and sought to see the good everywhere, and to judge impartially, with an all pervading charity.

The essay here given entitled "A Study in Ecclesiastical Polity" summarizes some of the general conclusions he had reached in October 1902. It first appeared in *Present Day Papers*.



## A STUDY IN ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY.

THERE appears in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* an article on the Ministry by Professor Schmiedel, which is the most important contribution upon the subject of church organisation since the publication in Germany of what is known as the Hatch-Harnack literature.\* This deepening interest in the beginnings of Church development is of especial importance to Friends, and we may be thankful that the work of Dr. Hatch is being pursued by such able scholars. Schmiedel traces step by step the congealing process which set in so rapidly in the Christian Fellowship.

He makes, of course, short work with the dogma of an unbroken apostolic succession, he is inclined to regard the bishop as a later creation than did Lightfoot, but he remarks " . . . however far the full consequences of the catholic constitution of the church may have been from having been explicitly drawn up prior to 180 A.D., all the premises were present, and they necessarily pressed forward to their full expression."

Schmiedel recognises the necessary place of organisation even in a spiritual fellowship, indeed not to recognise this is, as history has repeatedly shown, to fling wide the door to anarchy. But while he regards such organisation as, under certain forms, a mark of progress, he sounds at the same time a note of warning.

\* *Gesellschaftsverfassung der Christlichen Kirchen in Alterthum*, 1883, with Harnack's *Analekten*.

“Such arrangements,” that is, arrangements of which Schmiedel has expressed his approval, “may carry within them a danger to the purity of religion. The sharp division between members and non-members lends only too easily to an exaggerated consciousness of selectness and a depreciation of outsiders (Cp. 1 Cor. v. 12 f.). The practically compulsory attendance at the regular meetings, *the uniformity of the proceedings there*, the formal common prayer, may result in a cooling of the emotions of the heart; such a thing as attachment to the religious principles of the community, yet without full formal assent given and without participation in all ceremonies, is not regarded as admissible; and yet it is easily possible that not only particular institutions but also (and above all) the formulated expressions of the common faith may take such a form as many a one may find himself unable to accept, whilst yet his attitude towards the matter in its religious essence is entirely sympathetic and the impossibility of full membership is felt by him as involving a grievous loss. The interference in private affairs . . . may easily be carried further than is desirable; what is worse, in place of a pure concern for the imperilled individual may come concern for the interests of the community, for appearances, for the maintenance of decisions once arrived at though now in need of reform. . . . Above all there is apt to develop itself only too readily in the persons charged with the duty of ruling and judging an unhealthy sense of superiority. . . .”

We make no excuse for quoting at such length. Coming from a brilliant scholar who has just risen, as it were, from a close and exhaustive scrutiny of the beginnings of the church, the passage is of great significance. We are approaching a time when the question of the character of church fellowship will press with increasing urgency, and it is high time for us to have regard for the lessons of the past. We may be grateful for all impartial and critical study,



for such study has too often been biassed, the Anglican or Roman demanding of history the justification of his claims, the Quaker on the other hand seeking in the epistle to the Corinthians his ideal meeting, without proper regard for the practical difficulties so early encountered.

Signs of flux in the forms of church fellowship are not wanting. The movement known as the P.S.A. is in one sense a signal of distress.\* Chapels which

\* The following extract from a pamphlet entitled "The Problem of the Mid Town Church," by Bertram Smith and Francis Wrigley, B.A., with a preface by T. C. Taylor, M.P., leads up to an appeal for a P.S.A., and for considerable adaptation in the methods of worship. It serves to illustrate the point, and describes a condition not unknown to Friends.

"No one can deny that there is a widespread anxiety as to the future of Congregationalism. One of the saddest signs of the times is the great number of decaying city churches—churches that once were filled to overflowing, but now have been left lonely and desolate by the receding tide of suburbanism. Here is a church, for example, with accommodation for a thousand people, with excellent school premises, splendidly equipped, standing within easy distance of a great industrial population, yet at no service on a Sunday with a congregation of more than about 200 worshippers, and most of them not drawn from the immediate neighbourhood. Every year the burden of sustaining the cause becomes more difficult. The few families still loyal to the church of their fathers grow less and less in number; their children, who have not the same associations with the old place, find another home in the suburbs, or drift 'to the Church'; a feeling of depression and hopelessness steals over the hearts of minister and people," etc.

It may be useful to set against this a quotation from Dr. Horton's address on Public Worship, p. 97, *Free Church Year Book*, 1901.

"Therefore what I want to urge upon you is that you deliberately and even ostentatiously, put aside all these attractions, which are supposed to draw people to the House of God. I am asking for a great reversal of a tendency that has been growing amongst us; I am asking for a revolutionary change, and I would not venture to do it were it not that I understand that the effect of the present method is that our congregations are smaller and our churches worse attended than they were thirty years ago. I do not dogmatically say that these methods are wrong. I simply point out that they have failed. The masses are more indifferent to public worship than they were . . . I will have no attractions in my church unless they are the austere and awful attractions of Mount Sinai and Mount Calvary."

can no longer "draw" by the ordinary means, adopt special "popular" services. The Adult School Movement, on the other hand, stands as a practical comment upon the insufficiency of the Church, and a most suggestive indication of some neglected conditions of fellowship. Its proper place and its relation to existing church organisation is as yet hardly understood.

In the Anglican Church a remarkable transformation, of which more anon, has been in full progress, tending to exalt the authority of the clergyman, or rather, as he prefers it, the "priest"; an increasing elaboration of the service and a corresponding decline of the sermon.\* Changes in the social and intellectual environment have doubtless emphasised, if they have not induced these "adaptations," and if a just estimate is to be formed of them these must be properly weighed.

Confining our examination to the Society of Friends, we are met with the same type of evidence. There is a generally expressed sense of imperfect adaptation to existing needs. The report of the Home Mission Committee "On the use of Meeting-houses on First-day Evenings" is a document that should be carefully pondered, not so much for what it actually contains, though that is valuable, as for the suggestiveness of its facts. Having made an extensive inquiry into the practice of Friends in their various localities the Home Mission Committee reviews the situation as follows :

\* See address by the Bishop of Durham at the Church Congress at Leicester reported in the daily press.

\* “. . . it seems clear that the Morning Meeting for Worship continues to hold a very high, perhaps even an increasingly high place in the attachment and esteem of our members.

“Evening Meetings for Worship held as in the morning have evidently been widely discontinued, and when held are, with a few notable exceptions, poorly attended.” 139 out of 332 Evening Meetings reporting (two-fifths of the number) are held “on the same basis as an ordinary Friends’ Meeting with additions—as for example, the reading and exposition of Scripture, arranged addresses on Christian truth as held by Friends, greater liberty in the giving of Gospel addresses and of singing”; but “the ground plan is still largely that of individual responsibility and equality of opportunity.”

Forty-eight meetings (a seventh of the number reported) “are more distinctively classified as Gospel or Mission Meetings with a large amount of definite pre-arrangement throughout.” The report practically sums up the situation in its fifth “conclusion.” “The trend of thought among our members seems generally to be in one of two ways—viz. (a) the desire for meetings providing more teaching; (b) the desire for freer Gospel Meetings.”†

The existence of the Home Mission Committee is in itself not without bearing upon the subject under discussion. In their last annual report‡ thirty-five Friends are enumerated as working under the committee, and forty-nine meetings as being regularly

\* P. 39 f., *Extracts from the Minutes and Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting of Friends*, 1902.

† A remark of a correspondent is quoted which is of no little significance, “The Evening Meeting is a Friends’ Meeting for worship made homely.”

‡ See p. 19 f., *Extracts from the Minutes and Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting of Friends*, 1902.

visited by them. Grants in aid of Friends engaged in various parts of the country including office salaries amount to £3,957, and the principle of supported residence in a meeting is frankly accepted.

The natural alarm which this departure from the later practice of Friends called forth has now, to a large extent, evaporated. It is recognised that the work of the Home Mission Committee is, on the whole, conducted with caution, and that there are special practical needs which cannot be met by spasmodic or even by fairly regular visits of travelling ministers. There are, in fact, conditions which call for the more or less prolonged residence of a real Friend with the needful spiritual qualities, if permanent results are to be attained. Meetings which have been allowed through various causes to fall into decay need medicinal treatment, and the constant attendance of a doctor, until normal health is restored.

But while we accept the situation as of practical necessity, we are deeply impressed with the importance of steadily maintaining the fundamental Quaker conception of worship. A Friends' Mission ought *not* to be the same as any other mission, for its object is different. If it be here demurred that the object in all missions is to bring people to Christ, we answer : True, but the statement requires definition. Men view Christ differently from their various standpoints, and Quakerism, as one particular view of Christ, must express itself according to its own standpoint. This implies the true priesthood of all believers, with its practical consequences in the fellowship. An Anglican or a Wesleyan mission, for example, may gather people



to Christ, but in either case, if a congregation be formed, a clergyman or a pastor is set over it, and the freedom of spiritual exercise inevitably confined.

The thoughts which naturally arise from a study of Hatch, McGiffert, or Schmiedel, bear very directly upon all these phenomena ; and especially when we view the state of flux in the Society of Friends in all its Yearly Meetings.

Do Friends at all realise the magnitude or the import of the change which is taking place ? Do they know at all where they are steering ? Have they given penetrating thought to the practical issue before them ? We do not think so, and that at present they are drifting without a proper knowledge of their course is not the least of the dangers attending the transition.

Let us briefly state the facts.

The number of Friends of all branches throughout the world is in round numbers 134,000, made up as follows :—

Name of Yearly Meeting.	Membership in 1901.
Indiana, U.S.A. . . . .	20,224
“ Hicksite,” “ Wilburite,” and other branches of Friends not in correspond- ence with London Yearly Meeting * (estimated) . . . . .	20,000
London ( <i>i.e.</i> England) not including 236 resident in Australasia . . . . .	17,240
Western U.S.A. . . . .	15,915
Kansas, U.S.A. . . . .	11,002
Iowa, U.S.A. . . . .	10,814
Wilmington, U.S.A. . . . .	6,299
Ohio, U.S.A. . . . .	5,489
North Carolina, U.S.A. . . . .	5,483
New England, U.S.A. . . . .	4,532



Name of Yearly Meeting.	Membership in 1901.
Philadelphia (Orthodox, not in correspondence with London Y.M.),* probably over-estimated .. .. .	4,400
New York, U.S.A. .. .. .	3,606
Ireland .. .. .	2,609
Oregon, U.S.A. .. .. .	1,607
California, U.S.A. .. .. .	1,567
Baltimore, U.S.A. .. .. .	1,217
Canada .. .. .	1,059
Australasia (probably under-estimated, including 236 who retain English membership) .. .. .	786
Scattered (certainly under the mark) ..	257
	<hr/> 134,096

This table may be analysed thus :—

<i>America.</i>	<i>Rest of the World.</i>
In correspondence with London Y.M. .. .. . 88,804	England .. .. . 17,240
	Ireland .. .. . 2,609
	All other .. .. . 1,043
Not in correspondence with London Y.M. .. .. . 24,400	
Total, America .. .. . 113,204	Total, rest of World 20,892

We would call particular attention to a feature at present confined to the Quakerism of the United States. In America a system known as the "Pastoral" has found wide acceptance. Writing in an earlier number of this journal† we expressed our opinion of it as follows: "The system which may now be studied in

\* *i.e.*; exchanging Epistles with London Yearly Meeting, which implies official recognition. These bodies separated from the parent body at different times, on theological and other grounds.

† "A Plea for a Quaker Settlement." *Present Day Papers*, Vol. II.; pp. 11-13.

all the stages of its development, has overrun the Western Yearly Meetings, and has made large inroads into the Conservative Quakerism of the East. . . . We have no sympathy with that policy of criticism which English Friends have sometimes unhappily pursued. But we feel bound to state clearly that this development is to us a matter of the gravest concern, and that after the most careful investigation we believe it involves the increasing departure, more or less conscious, from our fundamental conception of worship. The point of importance for us is this: the Pastoral system, whether we approve it or no, was established as a consequence of previous failure."

To these opinions we adhere, but on this occasion it seems desirable to state more clearly what the Pastoral system is. Believing that its initiation was of importance not only from the standpoint of Quaker Church polity, but of Church history as a whole, we devoted some months to a close personal study of the system at first hand, and gathered a mass of material to which we have from time to time been able to add.

We venture to draw upon the knowledge thus obtained for a brief and confessedly incomplete sketch of the origin and course of the movement. And considering the movement, the origin is all important. It was briefly the failure of the ministry under the old order. We shall be opposed with the objection that the immediate cause of this must have been a decline in spiritual life. Granted, but why did the spiritual life decline? We have not space for an exhaustive examination into an interesting question which is really of present moment, but we are satisfied that an im-

portant cause was the absence of adequate provision for teaching, and the practical impotence, arising from an exaggerated dread of arrangements, which tended to increasing feebleness in the congregational life. The ministry was too often ineffectual, to use no harsher term, and the central conception of the Quaker ideal, inadequately portrayed both in preaching and practice, failed to provoke evangelical effort.

Here and there as early as the 'sixties, and doubtless in response to the influence of Joseph John Gurney amongst others, there were uneasy stirrings. Some changes were locally effected in the practice of worship, which led to serious discord, but broadly speaking, a somewhat formal conservatism prevailed.

Into this atmosphere of suspended animation swept the hurricane of Moody's revival.\* Many Quakers were carried off their feet. For the first time in their lives they felt the uplift of congregational singing when the heart is in the voice, and abandoning the old restrictions, flung themselves with fervour into the revival campaign. There was little or no distinction between the Methodist and the Quaker. In a Quaker village, the Methodist missionary sent his converts to claim the fellowship of the Meeting-house, and in a Methodist village, the Quaker returned the compliment.

When the hurricane passed, the landscape was changed. Crowds converted in the Mission Hall had found their way into the Meeting-house. They were not prepared for the silence nor for a ministry of tangled

\* It should be said that the leading evangelists among Friends had commenced their work before D. L. Moody began his revival. The latter undoubtedly added great impetus to the Friends' work.

texts set to a Gregorian chant. They chafed, hesitated, and slowly drifted away.

But there were Friends who, having laboured to draw them in, were not prepared to let them out! Adaptation became the watchword. There must be more freedom, there must be singing, there must be direct preaching.

Step by step changes came, tardily perhaps at first, but, early in the 'eighties, with an increasing sweep. Admirable as was the spirit, there was nevertheless behind these changes a fatal misconception. After the "splits" (for American Christianity is ever fissiparous, and before the great revival, discord had thrown her apple into the Quaker Church) the progressive or "fast" Friends, as they were called, found themselves in possession.

They concluded that the old conception of the Free Ministry was impracticable, and it became their aim to draw close to what they regarded as the successful Evangelical Churches. The "meeting-house" became a "church" with stained glass windows, and with a bell which summoned the congregation to worship; the gallery became a platform and the platform became smaller; the body of the meeting became the "audience" or the "auditorium"; the service was pre-arranged, and a practised choir with conductor, solos and anthems, an organ, little or no silence, a preacher supported by the congregation, who dismisses his people with uplifted hands and the Benediction, and before whom Friends are married kneeling, are the inevitable outward marks of this inward policy.



The whole of this description will not, of course, apply to every case, but we have in our possession a pile of notebooks, the contents of which are conclusive as to the general and inevitable drift. Every stage of evolution is represented, but unless some unforeseen counter-movement is developed, of which there is no present sign, and unless history is without meaning, the freedom of the ministry, the individual exercise in worship, and the basis of silence upon which these must necessarily rest, seem doomed. A pastoral superintendent of one of the largest of the Yearly Meetings pointed out that a meeting without a pastor was in the black books of the Pastoral Committee, and would be under pressure until it fell into line. He definitely asserted that the Pastoral system was intended to be permanent, and that the old order was effete ; in fact, "all the premisses are present" and at the moment seem "pressing forward to their full expression." We might multiply instances did space permit, but perhaps have sufficiently sketched the situation. We would only remark that the sketch is drawn without malice.

American Friends must work out their own salvation. They have faced great difficulties with splendid courage, and have set an example in devoted earnestness and practical effort, which English Friends may well emulate.\*

Whether they have taken sufficient count of the

\* It would be an error to suppose that we have fully described the Pastoral system. In many respects it is simply a practical recognition of the necessity for pastoral care, and there is much to be learnt from it. We are concerned primarily, however, with what we regard as its dangerous elements.



lessons of Church History we must however gravely question.

Our desire is that with a full knowledge of the facts, Friends on both sides of the Atlantic shall face the problem of the Free Ministry as a problem *not solved but still awaiting solution*.

It is not yet too late for American Friends to give such a direction to the pastoral movement that the conclusion which seems at present inevitable may be averted, and they will do a great service not only to themselves and to us, but to the Church of Christ, if by avoiding the weakness of both the free and the paid ministry they can point out for us a safe line of advance.

Meanwhile, let us return to our figures. Appended is a table setting out the statistical relationship of Pastoral to Non-pastoral Quakerism.

<i>Non-Pastoral.*</i>			<i>Pastoral.</i>	
<i>America :</i>			<i>America :</i>	
In Correspondence			In Correspondence	82,000
(estimated) ..	6,000			
Not in Correspondence .. ..	24,400			
	<hr/>			
Total America	30,400			
Rest of World ..	20,892			
	<hr/>			
Total Non-Pastoral	51,292		Total Pastoral ..	82,000
	<hr/>			<hr/>
(or 38 per cent. of the world's total).			(or 62 per cent. of the world's total).	

\* *i.e.*; conducting worship, etc., according to the practice of London Y.M.

The fact that already only 38 per cent., or considerably less than half of the Friends in all the Yearly Meetings of the world, worship substantially upon the basis of the practice of London Yearly Meeting, surely offers food for serious reflection.

The lesson of the American situation appears to be twofold. It points, on the one hand, to the danger of undisciplined freedom, and the disregard of the human conditions of church fellowship, which are the temptations of mystical religion; and on the other hand, of haste and the disregard of historical teaching in relation to church organisation, which are the temptations of evangelising zeal. Already it is clear from the facts that the position of present-day Quakerism is critical. Friends are being called by the peculiar circumstances of the time to vindicate the Free Ministry as a practicable ideal, and the question remains, Will they have the self-sacrifice and the statesmanship that the occasion demands? They are no longer a leisured body cut off by legislation from many of the channels of public service; the pressure of commerce, and the increasing necessity for virile religious teaching, emphasise the difficulties which the artificial seclusion of the past has served in part to conceal.

Unless there be a spiritual awakening expressing itself in practical measures, there is danger lest the Society of Friends as an organised body cherishing a spiritual conception of fellowship shall melt like a late snow before an April sun.

We may be charged with pessimism, but the charge does not touch us. We recognise with gladness many

signs of life. Nevertheless we must insist that the crucial nature of the situation is not understood. Until Friends see things as they really are, and give evidence as a body that they intend to face the facts, we must continue to set them forth, especially as it appears to us that the opportunity for "Quakerism"—and we must never be interpreted as using the term in its narrow sectarian sense—seems prepared in a most remarkable degree.

At the Free Church Congress in 1901, Dr. Horton delivered an address on "The Lord's Day,"\* and spoke as follows: "I believe that the sanctuary as a place of open communion and of the restoration of the spirit would be a Godsend to many human beings to-day; and some of our friends like Professor Rendel Harris, who believe in a quiet worship, have a great mission for the present day if they can only make clear to strained modern nerves that worship is settling down quietly in the presence of God, and that life may be recovered by contact with Him. We cannot disguise the fact that the tendencies of the present day are strongly against public worship." Here is a challenge! It is the more interesting that it comes just when the movement towards sacerdotalism and ritual appears at its height. And yet it is timely. One first and natural result of the intellectual upheaval in religious thought—we can call it nothing less—is to accentuate the desire for an authoritative church.

First and natural, but not ultimate. In the long run an intellectual awakening must make against all claims which are based upon superficial, unhistorical

\* *Free Church Year Book*, 1901, p. 95.

or irrational grounds. It is the first shock of the new movement which frightens men and drives them to seek refuge behind the walls of sacerdotal pretension or within the citadel of an infallible book. The final consequence must be to drive men back upon their inner consciousness and to deepen the bases of faith. That final consequence is our opportunity. Is our spiritual message ready? Can we articulate it? Do we comprehend the philosophical content, the tremendous spiritual import of Fox's "gospel"? Can we give it a vital and modern interpretation?

At present the answer is no! The Society of Friends does not understand itself. It is a loose fellowship, bound partly by tradition and habit and only to a comparatively small extent by the living ties of a common consciousness. Almost every range of doctrinal thought from Calvinism to Unitarianism is to be found amongst us, and Fox was neither a Unitarian nor a Calvinist. Wild fantastic forms of thought from time to time run riot here and there, for lack of a steadying central conception. If we attempt to speak we are a discord.

An iron uniformity is neither possible nor to be desired. Our quotation from Professor Schmiedel may remind us of its fatuity, and the terrible crudity of the Richmond Declaration of Faith may give us pause. But a greater measure of unity, of intellectual apprehension, and of affinity with a spiritual ideal is of cardinal moment.

Outward effort, social earnestness, missionary enterprise, these can have no permanence unless they radiate from a common centre of quickening life.

John Morley has somewhere said that "the chances of exceptional genius, moral or intellectual, in the gifted few, are highest in a society where the average interest, curiosity, capacity, are highest." We are not concerned to produce a race of merely clever giants, but if we are to take the opportunity that Time is waiting to give, it will be by increasing the sensitiveness to spiritual tuition, and raising the general average of spiritual knowledge and experience.

This can be achieved by no one process. Various practical measures will have their place, various influences directly and indirectly "religious" must be brought to bear, and every method and every influence must be steeped in self-sacrifice.

We want thought, we want vision, we want the touch of soul with soul. The Summer Schools have given us some taste of the power of fellowship dominated by the sense of union with God.

A rare opportunity has now opened to give further definition to the work already achieved. May we have the courage to accept it in the light of our own great need, and of the widening range of service which the future reveals.





## FAMILY EXCLUSIVENESS.\*

[This essay, a plea for Christian catholicity in the home, in society, and in the church, appeared in *Present Day Papers*, November, 1902.]

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“And the multitude cometh together again so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when his friends heard it they went out to lay hold on him for they said, “He is beside himself” . . . And there came his mother and his brethren; and standing without they sent unto him, and a multitude was sitting about him; and they say unto him, “Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee!” And he answered them, and saith “Who is my mother and my brethren?”†

WHAT was the motive of this visit? Why did the “mother and brethren” seek out Jesus in the midst of his labours?

The key to the situation lies in the words, “He is beside himself.” If we use our imagination—and in historical retrospect imagination is something more than legitimate, it is essential,—we shall readily understand how the matter presented both to Jesus and to the family circle from which he has but lately stepped.

“Think ye that I am come to give peace in the earth? I tell you nay, but rather division; for there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided

\* We are indebted to some notes by Dr. Hastings in the *Expository Times* for suggestions which are here developed.

† Mark iii. 20; 21; 31-33.

three against two and two against three. They shall be divided father against son and son against father.”\* . . . These words are something more than a prophecy. They reveal the bitterness of a personal experience.

“In his own country he could do no mighty work. A prophet is not without honour save in his own country, and among his own kin and in his own house.”†

We cannot ignore the deliberate steps of progression,—first the country, then the kin, then the home ; their indication is clear. His *own* people understood him not. We do not need to assume that because of misunderstanding their affection was withheld, for affection and misunderstanding are not incompatible ; but still the house was divided against itself.

In the storm on the lake the disciples seeing their teacher so calm in the midst of peril exclaim, “Who then is this ?” They echoed an old question, a question that had been asked, sometimes perhaps with a note of irritation rather than of wonder, at least a dozen times, in the carpenter’s mountain home. Can you not picture them in Nazareth, the shrewd wise-heads, cautious and not unworldly with all their religion, shaking their heads solemnly as the news trickled in ? “He has spoken here, he has spoken there, this and that has he said ? And what ? repeat it ! No, it is incredible ; Jesus, who played in our village streets as a little lad, whom we have known all his life, claiming to be the Messiah ?”

“Whence has he all this ? Joseph ? Mary ?”—and step by step back along the line of descent they

\* Luke xii. 51.

† Mark vi. 1-6.

trace his origin. "This is no royal house ; it is but a lowly lineage."

"Whence then *has* he all this ? Our great ones say it is of an evil source, and they are wise and learned in the law." Doubt yields to scorn.

Many an one had his cart mended at the little shanty, and the son has held the nails as the father drove them in, quiet, obedient, of pleasant manner and speech ; but still—a carpenter's son !

"And they were offended in him." Offence in the village meant uneasiness in the home. The neighbours talked ! Doubtless they spoke their mind to Mary with that discriminating tact for which neighbours have ever been famous.

That the family loved Jesus we would fain believe, that they could not understand him, feared for him, desired to hold him back from what seemed like unbalanced presumption, is after all only natural. More, they regard his teaching as unsound. Did he not break the Sabbath, defy the Pharisees, set good pious people talking against him ?

The situation he was creating for them in the village was intolerable. Talk that is derogatory was no easier to bear 1,900 years ago than it is to-day.

And now when Jesus had gone through every city and village preaching the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God, when he had taken the candle from the vessel and lighted it, and had told the people to take heed to his words that they might hear his message, "come his mother and his brethren !"

Through all his youth Jesus had shared the burden of the family and paid his tribute to the family

exchequer. Probably not till that burden was distributed on shoulders qualified to bear it, and not till the means of subsistence were secure, had he felt freedom to take up his ministry and leave the home which he loved.

Perhaps this is the secret of the thirty years of silence.

Be that as it may, he turned to the people about him, saying to the man who told him of his mother's message from the outskirts of the thronging crowd, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?" and stretching forth his hand towards his disciples, his "learning knights," as the Saxon version has it, exclaims with the rapture of a prophet, "Behold my mother and my brethren!"

What did Jesus mean? Beneath his mother's mistrust there was the yearning of a mother's heart. Then was not this a cruel rebuff? We get some light upon our question from the story of Martha and Mary; Martha anxious and troubled about many things and cumbered about much serving, Mary sitting at his feet. The rebuke is to Martha who was doing so much for him, preparing his meal, seeking to honour the guest, and not to Mary who is apparently neglecting the rules of hospitality as she sits at his feet.

Jesus is distinguishing between the inward devotion to his teaching, and the outward devotion to his person. However kindly and sincere that outward devotion might be it was the inward devotion that he prized most highly.

"Is not this," say the villagers, "the carpenter's son?" Nay! He is no longer the carpenter's son,



he is the son of man. He has served the family, now he serves humanity !

He does not seek external relationship, external service. Adhesion to him must be adhesion not to a carpenter but to a Divine principle. He is preaching the Kingdom. He is setting a new value upon old things. A widow's mite is more precious than uncounted riches, and father and mother, home and friends, all that men hold most close in the treasury of the heart, must be freely yielded in the service of the larger family of God.

The Kingdom is within, not without. Its relationships are spiritual and eternal, not temporal and of the flesh alone.

The world, suffering humanity, these who sit like Mary at his feet, are his mother and brethren. To go back to the little mountain village would be to abandon the glorious city not made with hands, that he was to build upon the wide basis of earth. Let us interpret his thought by applying it to our modern life. First to the family, second to the state, and third to the church.

First, then, *The Family*.

It was Jesus who had done so much for the family, who broke the family bonds. He knew that the family, though it was the inevitable focus of social life, and might be the nursery of virtue, could also in its spirit oppose the advent of the Kingdom. Every Englishman's home is his castle ; alas ! how often is it the stronghold of his selfishness.

Pride of place, pride of wealth, pride of tradition, pride in lands and houses, such pride it is that warps

a man's vision and withers his soul. What compromise with conscience, what hardening of heart, what narrowing of aim does it not involve? When the family stands for exclusive possession, then it is that, like a piercing sword, the words of Jesus are directed against it. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he that does not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

We would not be misunderstood. This is no argument for the weakening of family ties, no covert attack upon the sanctity of the fireside. In these days when our young people move easily into the larger life of the world, when the world, in magazine and newspaper, is for ever thrusting itself upon our private life, we should be far indeed from minimising in any degree those priceless influences which take their refuge in the home. "The home," as Mazzini has finely said, "is the heart's fatherland." The country in which its influence weakens shall assuredly be numbered, like Assyria and Rome, among the shipwrecked nations. The strange thing is that it is Jesus, claiming humanity for his mother and brethren, who has given us back the home life, enriched with a sweeter and a purer joy. If the home be not merely of the earth, if it be the centrifugal centre, not of selfish but of selfless love, then be assured that, however paltry its outward adorning, it has even now its number and place in a street of the new Jerusalem.

But when the home is walled and barred by exclusiveness, when it is cherished as in itself the end, when we gather wealth for the family and not for him, when we set our face against public duty that we may win selfish leisure and comfort for ourselves, then do we sin against the Kingdom and utter the negation of brotherhood.

The caste marks of Society, the "creeping paralysis of luxury," the heartless disregard of social justice in the blind pursuit of pleasure, these are the witness to that selfish and ignoble spirit against which Jesus continually strove.

When he stepped from the village into the world, it was that he might strip off from every family all that was degrading and mean. But note that in the purified conception of the family which Jesus has given us there is no lessening of the family obligation. We are not to put the world to rights while the ashes grow cold on the family hearth. Charity knows no limits, but she knows that her origin is in the intimate companionship of family life. We must only be careful not to bind her hands.

Probably for some fifteen years or more Jesus laboured at the carpenter's bench. There is a profound teaching in this unrecorded ministry.

And then *The State*—for the State is a larger family. Do not the same principles apply? Yes, but they are harder to put in practice. The Christian conception of patriotism cuts right across the pagan, and the pagan roots to present day patriotism are not far to seek.

Many Englishmen—they would not, of course,

put it so baldly—measure their patriotism by the contempt they pour upon other nations. “Mine is the greatest country, the greatest fleet, the greatest power, the greatest glory, the greatest destiny!”

How this boasting withers under the calm scrutiny of Christ. How low are our standards measured by his, how superficial our estimate of value.

The popular conception of international relations is as yet hardly redeemed from the taint of the prize ring. How splendid are the thews of your champion! How fine your military organisation! How jealously you watch the expansion of Germany, the growing wealth of America, the territorial aggrandisements of Russia. “Christian” diplomacy is a tissue of lies, a mask of dissembling. You play for the common good of the nations when it suits you, but *always* for your own!

As yet, in international politics, the selfish family spirit is almost supreme. When shall we recognise that Germany, France, Russia, these are our “mother and brethren,” that in very truth the Kingdom is *within*, and that so it be on earth as in heaven, “supremacy,” “the balance of power” are but chaff in the scales.

Nowhere has the church failed more miserably than in preaching the inclusiveness of the Kingdom, the oneness of humanity under the Fatherhood of God.

Must we then do violence to our patriotism? Is it wrong to love our country? Surely not. Yet here again, He who bids us love our enemies, seek the Kingdom that is within, and welcome all men as



brothers, gives us back our country as a nobler trust and our patriotism as a purer passion. Nations, no less than individuals, must learn the hard lesson that to seek life, it must be lost in the service, not of Mammon but of God.

And finally, the lessons of the family apply to *The Church*. It is possible for that separatist spirit, that negation of brotherhood, which we have noted in the family and the nation, to prevail here also.

Have you ever entered a railway carriage which has come perhaps some distance and has some occupants who have travelled together? Perhaps you have encountered the chilling stare of disapproval with which your entry is greeted. *Very* slowly and *very* reluctantly rugs and bags are moved to give you room. The knees next the door are aggressively rigid as you stumble past with your burdens. So it is often in the Church. The tabernacle has been erected, its membership formed, and subtly but surely as the original fervours cool there creeps over the fellowship the spirit of family exclusiveness. It breaks out in various directions, it takes various shapes.

Among our social amenities there are certain stereotyped customs which come to be observed, perhaps some of them legitimate and desirable in their origin, but generally tending to limit our freedom of intercourse and to give authority to that caricature of fellowship which we are pleased to call "Fashionable Society!" Likewise in the organism of the Church a certain stereotyping takes place; certain customs come to acquire an increased definition and importance, and finally, like the liana, to wind so



tightly about the Church Life as to endanger or check its growth.

Professor Schmiedel's warning comment on the congealing process of church development is freshly with us, and has its application here. The spiritual family may become exclusive, then formal, then self-complacent, and complacency in spiritual matters is the doorway of death. A ground-work of organisation there must be, but the essential freedom of spiritual life must never be hampered, nor the limits of spiritual sympathy be defined.

Stephen Grellet filled St. Martin's Lane Meeting-house with prostitutes, and spoke to them of the love of God till they felt the touch of an unwonted purity, and though many good people were doubtless shocked, he was never nearer to his Master than when he did this service.

We come aback to the point from which we started. The family of the Church must be the centre of selfless love if it is to be a true spiritual home. Not a few misinterpret Mary's attitude at the feet of Christ. An exquisite mysticism daintily gloved, an atmosphere of vague contemplation divorced from practice, a luxury of worship screened by æsthetic barriers from the ugliness of an unsatisfactory world, are not seldom regarded as true religion. Stephen Grellet, to such starved souls, would seem like Martha cumbered about much service! But Mary was drinking in from the lips of Jesus as he taught, the quickening life of the Spirit, which must by its nature, sooner or later, express itself in the service of fellowship.

Do we remember that Jesus shocked the ortho-

doxy of his day, the correct, conventional people who worship the proprieties? He dined with Publicans and Sinners, and defiled his ceremonial purity by their base touch. Nor did he dine with them because it was his duty to elevate them, but because he *loved* them. That is the trouble about so much of our charity and service, it lacks the quality of genuine love. "Let us clearly hold in mind," says the writer of *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*, "that love that is less than liking is not love. If then we love our enemies and sinners, it must be by genuine liking for all that it is possible to like in them, which cannot be found out without companionship and some community of interest. The ungodly have done well to jeer at Christian love when this element of liking has been lost in sophistry. If without unnaturalness we discover all there is to like in a man, the effort will bring us very near to the practice of Jesus, in whose life we see the great value which God sets on *bon-homie*, the God-likeness of simple good nature. He feasted with all who invited him, were they false teachers or corrupt politicians." And this, we may add, by way of caution, was something very different from the accommodating compromise of the worldly religious, who desire to be worldly with the worldly, and religious with the religious, in sheer feeble dread of giving offence.

Let the church free herself from formalism, keep her organisation and her church life simple, her fellowship open and her sympathy free, and we shall hear less of the gulf between the church and the masses. There is a central insincerity in the profession of organised Christianity, which is not far

removed in its essence from the social exclusiveness of family pride. "Who then is this?" asked those who were with Jesus. "Why is God silent?" says the worldling to-day.

Bondage to self, whether in the family or the church, means spiritual deafness to the voice of God. So long as your sympathies are turned inward instead of reaching out and searching all the nooks and crannies of life, so long God must remain invisible and silent, for your eyes and ears are bent on the one spot on earth where the manifestation of His presence is denied. He is not really silent. He continually speaks in the hearts and through the lives of countless men and women, did you but listen.

The great gods pass through the great Time Hall  
Stately and high;  
The little men climb the little clay wall  
To watch them by.  
"We wait for the gods," the little men cry,  
"But these are our brothers passing by."

The great gods pass through the great Time Hall  
With veiled grace,  
The little men climb the little clay wall  
To bow the face.  
"Lo! these are our brothers passing by,  
Why tarry the gods?" the little men cry.

The great gods pass through the great Time Hall,  
But none can see;  
The little men nod by the dull clay wall,  
So tired they be.  
"'Tis a weary waiting for gods," they yawn,  
"There's a world of men, but the gods are gone."\*

\* Lines contributed some years ago to the *Scot's Magazine*.

## PENTECOST.

[The short paper under this heading is the writer's closing contribution to the series of *Present Day Papers*, which he had published for upwards of four years.]

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“And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. . . .”

*Acts ii. 2, 4.*

### *Foreword.*

IN closing the fifth volume of the *Present Day Papers* we are, for a time at least, closing the series. What have they stood for? What is the concern, to adopt a word familiar to Quaker use, under which they have appeared. It is hard in a brief space to say all that might be said. As we pass in review what we have written in these pages we are painfully conscious of the halting utterance, the incomplete portrayal. As we look forward we feel the crisis of the coming years, and confess that we lay aside the pen with not a little sadness. We should have welcomed a further opportunity of clothing in language, more clear and more urgent, the thoughts that still press for speech.

Briefly our concern has been two-fold, personal, as for the individual, and general, as for the church. Interested naturally and chiefly in the Society of



Friends, we have regarded the issues before it not from the standpoint of a sect, but of religion. We have no concern for any fellowship, save as it deepens individual experience in spiritual life, and produces that character which is the promise of the Kingdom. Professor James,\* speaking of the Quaker religion, makes the assertion that "in a day of shams it was a religion of veracity rooted in spiritual inwardness, and a return to something more like the original Gospel truth than men had ever known in England," and he continues, "So far as our Christian sects to-day are evolving into liberality, they are simply reverting in essence to the position which Fox and the early Quakers so long ago assumed."

This praise is spoken of Fox and his times.

To-day the Friends are a small and feeble folk, making but a slight impression upon the religious life of England, and only with difficulty "evolving into a liberality" which offers something of the hope and promise of an earlier time.

This fact, and the desire for that "religion of veracity" which is "rooted in spiritual inwardness" have been both the spur and the motive in our little enterprise.

"A religion of veracity," how the phrase appeals! How the shams of life have mocked us, when "jaded with the rush and glare of the interminable hours," we have sought, as in a darkness, the truth of God. The longing for that faith which, passing through experience beyond the region of dispute, can know no fear, possesses men with a ceaseless pain and drives

\* "Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 7.



them not seldom to revolt against a creed that seems but dead tradition.

"We belong," says William James, "in the most intimate sense, where our ideals belong," and we cannot be at rest until like Arthur's knights, we have found and seen our Holy Grail.

But this goal of all our striving—what may it be ?

"Not a vain and cold ideal,  
Not a poet's dream alone,  
But a presence warm and real,  
Seen and felt and known."

Aye ! though the mystery of life seem to us like some clinging fog upon a lonely moor—

"Tho' truths in manhood darkly join,  
Deep seated in our mystic frame,  
We yield all blessing to the Name  
Of Him that made them current coin."

To Him who is the Light and the Life and the Way of the world, the Interpreter of its riddle, the Healer of souls and the Saviour of men. He is our goal, his the love we would cherish, even though our lips refuse his Name.

In the beginning and at the end, in the vigour of youth and the weakness of old age, this is the intimate problem of our lives, to know him and in that knowledge, peace !

### *Review.*

It must not be supposed that we forget the supremacy of this personal question if in reviewing the field from the standpoint thus selected we turn first to consider the general issue before the Society of Friends.

We have repeatedly drawn attention in the *Present Day Papers* to the problem of the Free Ministry. Recently we set forth the startling facts as to the development of what is known as the Pastoral System in the Society of Friends, and pointed out that only 38 per cent.—and we believe the figure to be substantially accurate,—of our membership throughout the world, worship according to the practice of London Yearly Meeting. The remaining 62 per cent. have already more or less abandoned the idea of a ministry that is entirely unsupported, and appear at the present time to be approximating to a modified Methodism.

As yet the outlook for a free ministry is dark. A few Friends have been aroused to the real gravity of the situation, but the majority either fail to grasp the essential point, or slumber on in undisturbed complacency.

We have been weak so long that our standard of spiritual efficiency has fallen low, and habitude has bred in us an indifference to conditions which, if we were a living church, should sting us to activity.

Review calmly and impartially each meeting in turn, and though you may recognise to the full the many elements of hopefulness, you will be compelled to acknowledge the general and practical failure of the ministry. This is surely a fact of serious importance and not less so when the rapid growth of the Pastoral system is borne in mind.

How many young people are accepting in a weighty spirit the responsibility which a free Ministry must involve? What hold are we maintaining upon their imagination and their hearts?

Again and again the same story is told. The young people lack conviction, the ministry does not reach them, the half-life of the meeting for worship does not stir them, and they drift away. A hundred alluring voices of the world call to them from without, and thither they pass. They remain on our books but their strength is not ours, and their children will only remember the Quaker name as something remote, a respectable descent from an honourable ancestry ! Do not let us be deceived by our list of members. It is a fallacious document. As a record of our " fighting strength " it is a mockery. The living remnant is already dangerously small and among the cultured and intelligent tends ever to decrease.

The Anglican Church with her outward dignity of architecture, her claim of historical continuity, her culture, her æsthetic attractions, her comfortable doctrine of authority, and her social prestige, offers a natural home, not only to those drawn to her by conviction, but to those for whom religion is a secondary consideration, and who desire to appear well with the world.

And upon the other side what is there to say ?

So feeble is the witness borne to the freedom of our spiritual heritage, so negative and barren is the interpretation of our testimony, so threadbare and so poor is our simplicity, which in the baptism of the spirit would be riches indeed, that the glory of the Quaker ideal has drawn well nigh to extinguishment.

It is hard to say these things, but they are true, and they must be said. To *this* generation has been given to decide whether the Free Ministry, nay even

the Quaker testimony itself, shall survive in a living fellowship.

A slight numerical increase may be taken for what encouragement it can give, but it does not alter the fact that the conditions are to-day gravely critical, for the accumulated neglect of a century must bear its fruit, and the rapid social metamorphosis that has come upon us has not told all its tale.

We have yet to face lean years with a depleted granary, before we can win through to the time of corn and wine.

These facts form the basis of a movement which gathering strength during five short years already promises much.

The Summer Schools and Settlements have laid bare our needs and provoked our hunger for better things. They have deepened spiritual life at the same time that they have quickened intellectual interest in the subject matter of religion. The experimental year at "Woodbrooke," if rightly conducted, may prove a turning point. Nay! already under all the discouragement of declining power and disintegrating strength, we have felt the tides of the Spirit. But we must not expect results to flow at once from the Summer Schools. They are but part of the work of needful upbuilding, and since the mistakes of generations are not remedied in a day, their effect can only be slow. For it is not merely the ministry that is their concern. The ministry, if the stimulus to life, is also its fruit. Our object, therefore, is not so much the ministry as the creation of that type of character which will naturally support it, and which will of itself



inevitably demand in its worship the freedom of the power of God.

It is nothing less than a revolution that is involved, a revolution in our ideas, our character, and our outlook. Complacency must yield to self-sacrifice, selfishness in all its forms to the spirit of stewardship, parochialism to a quickened sympathy as wide as life, and love must crown the whole.

The ministry is weak because *we* are weak, our fellowship is small because we have not dared or cared to love enough, and so in the last resort we are driven back to the personal issue. Practical steps there are that can and must be taken. Our educational system, for instance, of such prime importance to the life of our church, is weakest at its *base*. The training and supply of teachers, and the provision of incomes adequate to their proper needs, demand what they have scarcely received, the immediate and pressing consideration of our wisest statesmen. Instruction, congregational and other, in the essentials of our faith is neglected at the moment to a degree that is extraordinary, and should be provided without loss of precious time, through pastoral committees or existing organisations. Our testimony for peace, the social question, the problem of poverty, so terrible a menace and so sad a reproach, these and like matters demand trained sympathetic thought and study, to ensure sound exposition and wise action.

But the need for a personal experience of spiritual truth, at once the goal and the motive of all we plead for, remains. It may seem a need that is hard to meet amid the confusion of tongues. The changes in



religious thought, the growth for the first time of a scientific criticism of Scripture, have bewildered us, and though science "charms her secret from the latest moon," men wander ignorant, not knowing the way.

It has indeed seemed as though the ruin of faith must be the end of criticism. But it is not so. Slowly, yet surely, we are being driven from our false positions to our true defence.

We may regret the serenity of unchallenged belief that once was ours, we may even resent the intrusion which has disturbed our peace, but we shall be wrong. It is better as it is.

Criticism is performing for us a needed service. It is compelling us from externals to seek reliance on the inward witness of God in the soul, and in this it is making for the essential teaching of the Quaker faith and ever further away from the sacerdotal position to which it has given but a fleeting strength. That the hardest trial is past, that there are no dark hours before the Christian church, we do not say. We believe the contrary. We believe that in the near future there will be a time of severer sifting than the church has ever known.

The more careful study of comparative mythology, the broader examination of the Gospel records in the light afforded by older and contemporary religions, will we believe force upon us questions that have long been evaded by the Christian apologists.

But those alone will suffer whose faith has been propped too exclusively upon historical evidence, and for whom the inward Voice has no sure message of living consolation. To believe that the essentials of

faith can really be touched is to abandon belief in the love of God. The received idea of what *is* essential may be affected, but that is the destruction of a misconception rather than of faith.

In spite of the conflict that rages about the believing soul we feel in all things the guiding hand of God, and the certainty that His Truth shall triumph in the minds as in the hearts of Men.

*Envoi.*

Let us strengthen our testimony along the line of the Soul's experience. Let us pray for the rushing wind of the Holy Spirit, for a new Pentecost in the Church on earth.

"God," says Ruysbroeck, "is nearer to us than our faculties." Let us pray not so much that our historical or theological beliefs may stand the test of the critic, but that, in the *vie intime* of the soul, we may know the living power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us pray with the Poet :

"Be near me when my faith is dry,  
And men, the flies of latter spring,  
That lay their eggs and sting and sing,  
And weave their petty cells and die."

Be near me ; bless with the benediction of Thy sweet love poured out upon the Cross. For the burden of the present and the trial of the future I am weak apart from Thee. Take me unto Thyself and make me Thine. Fire my heart with Thy passion, and touch my eyes with Thy finger that I may see my work and Thy work, the glory of Thy church that is to be.

And always, in the darkness as in the light,

Let us pray.



## THE PRESENT POSITION OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

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### INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

During the winter months of 1904-5 John Wilhelm Rowntree's desire that the religious Society to which he belonged should in very truth arise and live, grew in intensity and found expression in many ways. Whilst appealing to others, he never spared himself.

The following paper appeared in the pages of the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, in January, 1905.





## THE PRESENT POSITION OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

THERE are times when it is well for a person or a community to take stock of mental or spiritual assets, to reflect upon the inner meaning of passing events, and to have regard to their trend. It may indeed be whispered, as many weary pages of his biographies suggest, that the Quaker has too facile a gift for introspection, and at the threat of yet another self-analysis, it might seem not unnatural to cry aloud, "In the name of common-sense let us stop thinking and *do* something."

The writer confesses to a secret alliance with this revolutionary aim. It is his great hope that very soon the Society of Friends may, by "doing something," re-assert its positive claim, now so largely historical, if not in some measure even mythical, to a share in the constructive spiritual work that is afoot in the world. But two considerations weigh with him. The hospitable pages of the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner* are, by the title they bear, not inappropriately devoted to purposes of self-examination, and there is no evidence of any proper measure of clear vision and definition of aim able to impart such power to our fellowship as would justify an attempt to "stop thinking." The melancholy fact lies rather the other way. If it be the truth that our introspections have hitherto been largely

barren, it is also true that we are not doing the "something" upon which our hearts are set. In other words we have failed to arrive at that coherence of ideas, and unity and force of action, which are brought forth only of consecrated and vivifying thought.

I am not about to make the profound ejaculation that the "times are out of joint," that inevitable prefatory "hem" of the pessimist clearing his throat. On the contrary, I desire, however inadequately, to give expression to something of that belief in the future which I thank God has still possession of us. Beneath the husk of Quaker formalism there are signs of germinating seed. The present is no occasion for despair, but on the other hand there is no room for blind optimism. Facts are facts, and to handle them rightly we must first state them fairly and study them dispassionately. The Society, still suffering the effects of long years of limited vision and grave errors in its ecclesiastical administration, has been too near extinction to admit of any complacent satisfaction with its present state. If we have escaped shipwreck, it cannot yet be said that we have made our port.

I ask leave therefore to write frankly about delicate matters, and to say without reserve, but I trust with proper consideration, what I take to be some of the most urgent questions in the minds of the younger and therefore of the coming generation of Friends. I offer no "nostrums," but rather the rough notes of a recluse, much away from the activities of life, suggestions if it may be, towards more fruitful and constructive thinking upon the immediate problems of our outward and spiritual fellowship.

The first fact to consider will be the vast change in mental environment which affects, more or less directly, the mental habit and outlook of the average "young Friend." We often fail to realise the intellectual chasm which separates the young Quaker of 1905 from the Quakerism of a hundred or even of fifty years ago. It is not merely that he has stepped out of the magic circle of a carefully restricted and self-centred social life, and has been merged in the general organism of society; that he has abandoned the distinctive dress, speech and shibboleths which the world mistook for essential Quakerism; that he paints pictures, buys engravings, cultivates art, attends the concert and the play, it is rather that in many important respects his view of life, his "weltanschauung" has radically altered. The world has opened out to him, not gradually or by judicious stages, but as though folding doors had been suddenly flung wide to admit the curious to forbidden chambers. The sheltered life of the past, so far as he knows it by hearsay, seems a dull, starved existence from which the present is an emancipation. If he looks back at all, and this is seldom, it is with pity rather than regret.

That there is much of justice in his view any student of Quaker history will readily admit. Despite the delightful intercourse of certain coteries of bygone Quakers, there was often a deadly dulness, a torpor of undeveloped intellectual power, which bred worse things than mental sterility.

But this is scarcely the question. Be the respective merits of past and present what they may, and

they cannot be assigned in a parenthesis, we may take it that for better or for worse the old order is beyond recall. With its set feasts of Monthly and Quarterly meetings, and its annual social festivity in Bishopsgate, standing out in its calendar of microscopic interests as the chief events in the Quaker year, with its "yard" gossip, its thee and thou, its uniform social status, its close intermarrying of families, its comfortable mediocrity only broken here and there by a Grellet, a Fry, a Gurney, a Sturge, a Tuke, and a Seebohm, the quiet history of Victorian Quakerism is really the history of an inward revolution. The borders marked out in the eighteenth century have been finally overstepped, and now having broken with our past we turn perhaps not without misgiving to the unknown future. Shall we win back the fervours of the seventeenth century, make good our spiritual connection with the primitive giants who, wrestling mightily for the Lord, bore unflinching a cruel persecution, and in the twentieth century give such an interpretation to the Christian Gospel as may move the England of King Edward VII. as Fox moved the England of Cromwell and the Stuarts? That is the question. Once more we are back in the main stream of life, and like Fox and Barclay are aware of the surging current of modern thought. In the eighteenth century we floated into a backwater, but the floods have come and about us are the eddies of a hurrying river, the uprooted tokens of a tempest. Voltaire might dwell under a Quaker roof in Hampstead and write of the Quakers in his "*Lettres Philosophiques*," Hannah Barnard might perturb orthodoxy by her free handling of the Scriptures, Elias Hicks divide the



American fellowship and Isaac Crewdson the English, but these were external influences, disturbances which had their origin outside. It is true they were not without effect, but they failed to shake the self-contained aloofness of the Society or reproduce seventeenth century conditions when Quaker thought was at the very heart of English religious life. The public agitators who turned the country upside down and organised an extensive band of preachers to carry the fiery cross to every town and hamlet, shrank by a sudden transformation into a private body of respectable citizens. Let the Deists write their essays and Butler his "Analogy," Paley his "Evidences" and Paine his "Age of Reason," the Quaker has nothing to say upon the controversy of the hour. If the contagion of Gentile thought should touch the carefully shepherded fold, he sets in motion the machinery of "disownment," and ejects the innovators. Not until Joseph John Gurney successfully grafts the Evangelicalism of Charles Simeon and the Cambridge school into the Quaker stock is there a general stirring of the Quaker sap.

The remarkable output of books and pamphlets by the early Friends designed for the public eye, almost ceased with the Keithian controversy. Subsequent Quaker literature is private, hortatory or biographical rather than public, or if controversial, is often little else than the powder and shot of internecine feuds.

Though for a time the writings of Joseph John Gurney had great influence as the echo of the evangelical movement then in force, they were more an



attempt to bring Quaker views into some conformity with earnest contemporary religious life, than a direct development from the seventeenth century. They are scarcely "public" books in the sense that Robert Barclay's "Apology" may be so described, and they certainly failed to impress contemporary opinion in any marked degree. At present forgotten by the outside world they are neglected by Friends.

To bring this rapid survey to an issue, the young Friend stands briefly thus:—He has broken more emphatically with the past than would be true of any other generation of Quakers, he has neither time nor inclination to read the musty original literature of the Society, he is satisfied to connect Barclay with Ury, and leave him there. He has possibly dipped into Fox's Journal, but more likely he knows the leather breeches and the "woe" to the bloody city of Lichfield, and nothing more. The eighteenth and even the nineteenth century, so far as Quaker history is concerned, are to him a complete blank. He has heard of Elizabeth Fry, less often of John Woolman, and sometimes of Joseph Sturge. He has a vague idea that there was a Hicksite controversy, but only because he is aware that the question of corresponding with the "other branch" is a matter of present dispute, he has no notion what is meant by the "Beacon" or by John Wilbur's disownment, but turns from it all with an impatient shrug to his Adult School and its absorbing activities. "Better so," you say, "far better." "Better a live dog than a dead lion." Certainly! But there are some aspects of the situation which are

not so lightly dismissed. Remember that for the first time since the seventeenth century the young Friend finds himself in the open, and how is he equipped? He has little or no hold on the past, little or no acquaintance with any living Quaker literature for until lately there was but little of it. If the truth must be told that which he sees of concrete Quakerism, as for example in its Meetings for Worship, is not seldom discouraging. He has but little direct modern Quaker teaching to guide him in the struggle of faith.

For the last fifty years the Society of Friends so far from leading as it did in the seventeenth century, has been an unintelligent spectator of the greatest revolution in religious thought since the time of the Reformation. The effect of this, which we are only beginning to measure, tells directly upon the young, unformed mind. Literature is full of it. It cannot be escaped. On every hand science demolishes the old familiar landmarks. Biology, geology, and astronomy unite to make away with a cherished cosmogony, and the trained scientific scholarship of the modern Biblical student, immeasurably superior in intellectual force and honesty to the old rationalism, forces us by the sheer weight of its achievements to reconsider our attitude to the Holy Scriptures. Fundamental issues, centred in the heart of the Christian faith, are raised, fought out in reviews back and forth before the public eye. Is there a God? Is He knowable? What is inspiration? How far can we rely on the Bible? Was Jesus divine? Can we trust his claim to reveal the Father? How does the evolution of species affect

the problem of sin ?—and so forth and so forth. The mind grows dizzy in the mere recitation.

But more than this—there is a notable stirring of the social conscience. The existing order is challenged. Poverty in its hideous shape is regarded not as a fixed institution but as a social disease, an evil too great to be borne. That the many should suffer a stunted life while a few enjoy the freedom of wealth and leisure is a contradiction of brotherhood that cannot be glozed over by the application of a few stock platitudes. So it comes about that the old party lines break down, and time honoured political beliefs are seething in the melting-pot. In all this there is a great hope and a great peril. A great hope that out of the strife of tongues shall issue a new courage and a new faith,—a great peril that, ignorant of the past, we may fail to read its lessons and, wanting knowledge, miss the positive notes of a new Gospel. Of course, the consequences of the great revolution are for all churches alike, and each will meet them in its own way. The Roman Catholic will draw into the shell of ecclesiastical authority, and the High Anglican will do likewise, though he may poke his head out at times, but those who have abandoned the doctrine of an infallible church and have been driven out of their last defence—the doctrine of an infallible Book,—must face the final issue of faith. The hour of their supreme trial and their supreme victory is at hand, that which the Reformation foreshadowed and Fox almost saw.

For this reason, if we only knew it, the situation is one of peculiar peril and peculiar hopefulness for the Society of Friends. If we really understood, we have

the great opportunity of our history before us at this moment. But we do not understand. We stopped thinking in the seventeenth century. The thought-stuff of Fox, Penington and Barclay was never properly worked out. We never understood the Inward Light. We fell back from the advanced positions, set up an idolatry of the past, grew into formalists as ritual in temper as the Anglican with his crosses and processions, repelled fresh thought by discipline instead of argument, and finally accepted a compromise with mid-Victorian Evangelicalism. Where are we now? At cross-purposes. Just when the trumpets should sound for advance our general staff is in confusion. It has no plan of campaign. Some would march here, some there. Some attack, some retreat, with the result that like Kuropatkin on the Shaho we dig trenches and stand still. This, of course, is figurative writing, but it expresses a rough truth. What do I mean? I mean this: first, that we have never properly established the basis of belief, second, that we have never properly outlined the spiritual truth of the indwelling God, and its relation to sin; third, that we have wanted consistency and courage properly to express in conduct and life, in social relations and ideas, the large practical consequences which that truth involved. It is the profound issue of the basis of belief which in the last fifty years has again become acute. Except in a limited sense, the Bible was never the ultimate court of appeal. We have been slow to recognise this, but it is being forced upon us at last.

As Auguste Sabatier expresses it in his lecture on Religion and Modern Culture:—"No external witness



can prevail to-day against the inner and peculiar law of reason, for this sovereign law ever judges both the testimony and the witness. Even when we yield to the testimony of another, it is to our own mind that we are yielding, for we esteem that, after all, the thing is reasonable ; so much so that the assent of ourselves to ourselves appears more and more as the sole foundation of all human *rationality*, as well as of all *morality*."

This throws us back on the Inward Voice as the ultimate arbiter—even of the Bible. Is this to mean as Lecky drily suggests, "the deification of a strong internal persuasion"? Here it is that clear guidance and teaching is needed—that the doctrine of the Inward Light upon which the tongue trips so lightly requires searching elucidation. We are face to face with psychic phenomena but dimly understood—*pace* the elaborate text-books which codify everything,—and stand upon the edge of spiritual deeps of mystery and understanding which the fool cannot compass. The question is one not to be hastily handled. The difficulties of the doctrine of Inward Guidance are, as James Nayler's experience reminds us, serious and practical. I would suggest that the solution lies in a deeper interpretation of the person and message of Jesus Christ. Apart from the thought of God as we see Him set forth in Jesus, and the common consciousness of truth as revealed in lofty souls who have been touched by His spiritual fire, it is not evident how the faults of individual interpretation are to be corrected. It is at least significant that as the doctrine of Biblical infallibility has weakened, the interest of the thoughtful



world has centred with strange fascination upon the prophet of Nazareth. It may be that the loss of an infallible book is a shock to faith intended to drive us at last into real and effective union with him. In any case, and I say it with all tenderness, the main trend appears to be setting not only away from an ignorant obscurantism, hostile to the scientific method and knowledge, but away from what is usually understood as the Unitarian position. I use the label with diffidence, partly because it implies a reproach I would not utter, and a prejudice I do not share, and partly because the Unitarians have done much to rescue from a truly shocking theology the great Gospel conception of the Fatherhood of God,—nor do I forget that when Christian ministers called upon a Hebrew Jehovah for a bloody vengeance upon the wretched and ignorant farmers of the Transvaal many Unitarians upheld in striking contrast the practical teaching of the Prince of Peace. None the less it appears to me that in insisting that Jesus was merely man all the real beauty and significance of his life and our own is missed. If I give up external authority I do not want to know only what man can be, but what God is, and I want to see within the limits of human consciousness an identification or meeting-point between the soul of man and the unseen Spirit. If Jesus is that meeting-point of identification—a movement not merely of man towards a God who never answers, but of God towards man—then, with Jesus as the Gospel, witnessed in the conscience of a civilization infected by his Spirit, I see the balance wheel to the doctrine of the Inward Light.

This excursion into which I have been betrayed may serve to illustrate the lines of thought which open before us, and sets us free to draw our conclusion.

We may incline to ask what, in the light of existing facts, are the immediate prospects of the future. It is, I think, clear that there lies a grave menace in the extraordinary absence of constructive Quaker thought. If our young people continue on the one hand to draw their spiritual nourishment and take their intellectual guidance from sources outside the Quaker fellowship, and at the same time to find their main interest and activity in an undenominational Adult School movement, which tends increasingly to become interdenominational, there can be no question of the result. The Society of Friends as a separate organisation will speedily disappear. The hold it has upon its young life is even now perilously feeble. Who can rouse enthusiasm upon a cry of "no baptism," and "no supper," "no paid ministry," and "no singing"? These negations do not touch the heart of the modern questions which exercise us, it is impossible to maintain a fellowship upon negative distinctions, or to gather a people round a system of worship, however primitive or simple. It is only as the separate elements in the Quaker view of life are seen to cohere round an internal faith, and to take upon them the positive aspect of a constructive interpretation of divine truth, that they can claim validity or exercise power. The question of baptism and the supper are incidental and relatively unimportant. The vital point is our basis of belief, our interpretation of the Inward Light, of life, sin, death, and our relationship to God. The truth, clearly

grasped and passionately believed, will overcome where the mere tenets of a sect, atrophied by long divorce from the central life, fall unheeded like the dead formalisms they have already become.

It is the present fashion to congratulate ourselves upon two things: that we have no creed and that we are free from controversy. I am not sure of the first, and I doubt the unmixed blessing of the second. That we are no longer vexed by the spirit which animated the Hicksian and Beaconite controversies is indeed a favour from heaven, but that the causes which make for outward calm are altogether healthy I am prepared to deny.

In the first place there is a tendency—weakening I admit—to thrust aside thought upon the deepest issues for something more practical. “The mystery of life baffles me, but I know my duty, and I will turn from philosophy to the active service of men.” This is a healthy and needed reaction from an otherworldliness which regarded this life as a temporary exile from the Kingdom of God, to be endured with resignation; and forgot that it is but one among many of the heavenly workshops. Nevertheless it is a one-sided reaction and cannot last. Man needs a substratum of belief in order to draw from his life and work its fullest possibility and meaning. To say that we have no creed is only true in the sense that we have not shackled our intellects by a formal documentary declaration. The necessity remains as it was for Paul and for every victorious soul to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. And here the absence of controversy in the sense of public discussion conducted in the spirit

of mutual helpfulness is really fatal. If we were indeed at work upon the central truths of faith, Quaker literature would show more evidence of the results. We ought by now to have reached such a measure of understanding as would permit a frank interchange of views without the hateful bias of theological prejudice and with the object of constructive thought. If the silence is due to the fear of "heresy hunting," then those who are responsible, so far from defending the ark of the Lord, are in reality quenching the spirit and driving the young life of the Society into indifference. We shall pay the penalty when we find that our thoughtful people have left us for want of intellectual sympathy and spiritual nourishment.

The object of this argument is a plea. Returning life, under the altered conditions which now prevail, and in the face of the revolution which has taken place, will involve a free handling of subjects which by common consent have long been taboo. The doctrine of the Atonement, the inspiration of the Bible, the personality of Christ—these are questions which, had they been before us in the seventeenth century as they are to-day, would have been the open subject of discussion. If they are to possess reality for younger Friends, they must be so again, and those who have formed their views in the fifties, or have not felt the pressure of change, may render a high service if they will forbear to condemn, and will recognise the sincerity and earnestness of those from whom they differ. It is not the least hopeful and encouraging symptom that there should be so much rich and tender charity of feeling upon which to build. The development which is upon us



is not destructive. We have to work out, each generation for itself, our own interpretation of the Gospel. Already there are indications that the needed constructive work is upon the way. After a long silence our literature is showing signs of a new growth. In the writings of Rufus Jones, to name no other, the attempt is being made to attack the problem which remained unsolved at the close of the seventeenth century. That we should expect or desire to find our spiritual food only in books by Quakers is, of course, never pretended. We have been emancipated from the slavery of denominational narrowness, and laying the whole world in fee, we cherish a free trade in ideas. But if the Society of Friends is to have a wider and increasing service, if it is to hold its young people, if indeed it is to have a continued existence at all, it must produce a modern interpretation of its original conception, and lead the world of thought to a deeper interpretation of Jesus Christ.

If it is the weakness of what is called the evangelical school that it is not open to the growth of knowledge, it is certainly the weakness of the "Broad" school that it fails to interpret its message in the vibrant language of a living faith.

It is the earnest prayer of the writer that under the pressure of an urgent need, the two "schools" will come closer together, and will be each sufficiently humble to learn from the other. We must express our gospel in its spiritual and social aspect, so that our young people may find in our fellowship what they are seeking, the infection of a lofty view of life, and a fresh inspiration of the love and power of God,





## TO RISE AGAIN—A SERMON.

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### INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

At the meeting at Fourth and Green Streets, Philadelphia, First-day evening, Tenth month, 27, John Wilhelm Rowntree, of York, England, was present and spoke. The report following is from notes made by George B. Cock. It has not been revised by the speaker.

*The Friends' Intelligencer*, Philadelphia, 11th mo. 9th, 1901.



## TO RISE AGAIN—A SERMON.

“The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee ; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.”—*Isaiah xxxviii.* 18.

I REMEMBER once, on a brilliant morning in May, turning aside at the direction of my guide from the barren valley of the Tombs of the Kings, running up from the Nile at Luxor into the boundary of the desert. It was such a day as I suppose one could rarely find outside of Italy—a brilliant deep blue sky, sunshine that seemed to cut like a knife—so sharp were the shadows, so clearly defined even distant objects. As we turned aside from that brilliant sunshine, from that deep blue of the skies which spread like a curtain over the desert, into a narrow rock-hewn passage running into the cliff, we walked for some time upon a carpet of dust which had taken centuries to form,—as silent a carpet as ever decorated the floor of a rich man’s house ; upon either side upon the walls were multitudes of carvings, gradually becoming less distinct, as they penetrated deep into the gloom of the rock-hewn passage. At last we found ourselves in a small chamber, thick with dust ; in the middle the magnesian wire revealed to us the sarcophagus of an old king who lived 1,200 years before Christ ; and even as we looked, the light startled a creature in that rock-hewn chamber,

and we felt the fluttering of a bat in our faces. Our feet had disturbed the carpet of dust, and the air was thick and choking with the fine, impalpable sand of the desert, as it had drifted in through all these years.

Among the writings of the Assyrians there is an account of the goddess Ishtar descending into Hades ; and the account, which is in the form of an epic, describes how she went down into the nether regions of the world ; and though I cannot quote the exact words, I give you them nearly : “ But the house of darkness ” (as the ancient scribe proceeds) “ the house of darkness—the house men enter but do not depart from,” where “ the souls of the dead lie as fluttering wings.”

As I remember the experience of that day in Egypt there comes to me some dim sense of the horror of this pall over the future life for those people who knew not the larger hope. Many years afterward another sovereign wrote upon the tomb of her dead husband, “ Here at last I shall rest with thee—with thee in Christ to rise again.” That is what Queen Victoria wrote upon the mausoleum of the Prince Consort at Frogmore ; and that inscription marks the different measures of progress between the Old Testament and the New, between King Hezekiah and his gloominess, and the hope which is to be, of England to-day.

I do not think it is possible, from whatever standpoint we study the Bible, to ignore this difference, which is so strikingly illustrated, between what is known as the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the Old Testament the note of immortality is uncertain and hesitating : there is no clear and definite



teaching running through its pages ; but when we turn from the Old to the New we find ourselves in an atmosphere altogether different : the whole New Testament rings with the certainty of a new hope : the very language of that New Testament is the language of great expectation—how he that liveth and was dead shall have life for evermore. No matter what interpretation we place upon this account which describes the event of the Resurrection, one thing is perfectly clear to the student—that something occurred to introduce a new hope in a group of people who became afterwards the Christian Church—that a new dynamic entered the world with the Christian faith, and that it carried with it the larger hope.

Now it is not at all impossible that we, studying the lives of men and of women who have lived without that larger hope—without the certainty of the future life—it is not impossible, I say, that we should feel some measure of respect and admiration for their fortitude. It is impossible not to feel admiration for Marcus Aurelius ; it is impossible not to feel admiration of a different kind for King Hezekiah. Men have lived this life bravely, with the uncertainty of the future before them ; they have bent themselves with their whole energy to the immediate concerns of the present, and have steeled their hearts, strung their nerves, to bear with fortitude the uncertainty that lies in the very mystery of being. Perhaps it is possible for us to say, Is that not really the finer qualification ? Is there not a higher nobility in a life which can be lived with such discouragement, that it rings so pure and high ? We may shape the argument in a more positive

form : we may even say of those who live perfect lives for the sake of future reward, "What merit is it in them, any more than those who would shun evil for the sake of punishment which would follow, can be reckoned among the just ? "

I remember the story which is sometimes told of an old woman who was found one day setting forth with a brazier of coals in one hand and a pail of water in the other. She was going, she said, to burn up heaven with the coals, and to put out the flames of hell with the water, in order that men might learn to love God for His own sake, and to hate sin for its own sake. Surely we may sympathize with the moral of that story, even though it is somewhat quaintly framed. We can sympathize with the thought that lies behind the story. We recognise that virtue which is not pursued for its own sake is but a starveling thing at the best ; we can recognise that those who shun evil simply for the fear of consequences, are contemptible and mean ; and yet does it follow that in the admiration that all naturally feel for men like Marcus Aurelius we are right in accepting their position and their view of life ? That is a question to which there is more than one answer ; but I know that in speaking from my own experience my answer must be : " No, it does not follow."

There is a passage in the writings of the Apostle Paul which, I think, has a directly remarkable application to us to-day, though written without any thought of a twentieth century audience : " If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

Let us try and see by examination what the modern application of those words is for us. I want to call your attention to what I conceive to be the most serious development of our modern life. I think if I were to suggest a gospel which, it would seem, the majority of the world accepts as all-sufficient, it would be found in the words, "Eat, drink, and be merry ; for to-morrow we die." That, perhaps, puts it somewhat forcibly ; and yet it is not possible to look out upon life and not to recognise that Paganism, under a very thin disguise of conventional Christianity, flourishes upon every hand ; it is impossible not to recognise that selfishness in all its subtle and varied forms gangrenes society ; the love of pleasure has gained added means of satisfying pleasure ; the moral and spiritual fibre of this generation has been unstrung by the developments of luxury seducing men from the sterner hands of duty and of honour. Life has become so rich and so many-coloured that men refuse to look beyond the immediate present ; they decline to lift their eyes from the dust to the angel who stands there with the crown ; they epitomize the allegory of John Bunyan ; they persist in stirring up the dust upon the highway of life that it may hide from their eyes the White Presences upon the hills. They live in a fever of excitement ; not one, not two, but many newspapers in a day ; they are drowned in a sea of ephemeral literature, with morphine injections to drown the conscience. The world is becoming one great maelstrom, whose roar drowns the still, small voice of God. My friends, this is a moment of peril and of trial for the Christian Church. We are confronted

with an atheism far more terrible than the barren negative atheism of the cynic who denies God logically and defies the Christian Church with his logic. We are face to face with an atheism that laughs at the earnestness of the old atheist ; that cares not whether there be a God or no. It does not trouble to deny him—it passes by and ignores him. “Eat, drink, and be merry ; for to-morrow we die,”—on the other side those words of the Apostle Paul coming to us across the centuries, “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”

Years ago, long before the deductions of the morality of civilization had been introduced into the British Isles, when many savage people who had been brought up in the love of nature and who felt the spell of nature which charms, were brought face to face with Christian missionaries,—hearing the message of those missionaries they said that it gave a new view to life. Life had seemed to them, until that message came, like the flight of a bird from the cold darkness of a winter night into the warmth of a fire-lit room, and then into the darkness beyond—a momentary gleam of warmth and light, but darkness before and darkness behind. When we are thrown back upon ourselves—we modern pagans, with so much left of the true fibre of those old pagans who knew not the advantage of the Divine authentication ; when we modern pagans are thrown back upon ourselves by some sharp buffet of misfortune, when the gay toys with which we have amused ourselves are suddenly destroyed by a blow from the iron hand of fate, then, too, there may come to us a sense of the dreariness which came over King



Hezekiah ; then, too, we may realise that we have been living but on the surface of things, and that there is no real thought to our life ; then, as we look up, there will be no longer the cruder blessings of our life : the sky will have no star, and the sigh of a wind from the desert will bring the loneliness of despair. In such moments as those (and they come to some of us) it is not sufficient to admire Marcus Aurelius. Is there not something in the heart which asks for sustenance which it cannot define ? Do we not reach out with hands of prayer, longing for the shadow of the unseen God to be made manifest in some living shape that it may appeal to us and support us ?

I have quoted from King Hezekiah : let me quote from one very different. In Hezekiah there is hardly any profound philosophy. He represented perhaps simply the current ideas of his day and generation. Let us turn to Plato, the supremest of all the pagans. We find there that same longing which I believe lies at the root of every human heart, of a certainty of a true knowledge of God,—of a knowledge which shall interpret life, and give it its final and its fullest meaning. Plato longed for some sure, some definite word that might bear him across the sea of life's uncertainty. Yet to Plato there came no certain word, and he had to satisfy himself with the shadow and the best of human words. Are we to stop with Plato and with Marcus Aurelius ? is there no other significance for the larger hope than the mere selfish longing for eternal ease (which is utterly ignoble) or the mere selfish dread of eternal pain (which is no less ignoble) ? Or, is there something in those words of Paul full of deep



meaning : " If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable " ? Is there not something in that larger hope which is essential to the best welfare of the human race ? Is it not necessary for us, that our life shall be taken out of its self-containedness, and brought into unity with some eternal whole ? Is it not necessary for us, if our human life is to be lived as it can be lived, and should be lived, that it should be pierced through and through with divine meaning ?

Surely we need some key to our lives ! Surely we need that " sure and certain word " upon which we may rely ; surely we need some conception which interprets our life to us, and gives it a complete purpose, and adds to it a dignity which may fire our hearts with divine consciousness and fill our veins with a passion that may not be withstood ; and how is that to come to us ? From the mere thought of the immanent God ? The Greek had that thought of an immanent God ; he saw God in nature everywhere about him ; and yet the finest ethics of Greek philosophers is based on that cry of Plato ! " Oh, for some sure, some certain word ! "

What are you in the eye of nature ? Contradict her law, and you are a man torn by machinery into which he has got involved. The machine goes on relentlessly and you are dust ; you have got in the way of the law ; the law annihilates you. The hope there ? Surely not, if we probe deep enough.

This human experience,—is that all so clear that he who runs may read ? Is there no difficulty,—nothing to conflict with our thought of the universal

love? Ah! we have but to think a moment of the inconsistencies, and explain the sufferings, sometimes apparently so undeserved, with which humanity is afflicted, and it becomes surely possible for us, regarding that field alone as our evidence, to rise up here without the knowledge that God is love. No; if we are honest, and take life as it really is, we are bound to see its difficulties and its problems upon every hand, we are bound to cry with Plato for that divine, that surer word, which shall carry us across this sea of difficulty. And more than that; in our heart of hearts we know it; deep down there is a craving which cannot be quenched, which we cannot extinguish,—a craving for a personal knowledge of God, a groping in the darkness with hands of prayer feeling for Him we love, that through all this tangle of difficulty which surrounds us He may reach down to us the Divine hand, that we may grasp like children, that we may be lifted up out of that which threatens to overwhelm us, to feel and know the love of it. It is not a question of creeds; it is not a question of theology, of orthodoxy or heterodoxy; it is a question of reality, of healing; in a word, of knowing that God is love, to be so conscious of our relationship with Him that it can sustain us no matter what we think or believe. Such a relationship presses right down below words into the very centre of our being, and tides us over and bears us on and lifts us above all the trials and drag and friction of our every-day life. There is not a man, there is not a woman, that in his or her heart of hearts has not known that longing to know God.

Now, friends, I want to speak what is real to me

(if it be not real to you), and I want to be understood as speaking not as a demagogist but as talking out of a precious experience to myself, and a longing to have it shared by others. That consciousness has come to me through Jesus Christ ; it has come to me after darkness which it seemed to me at one time was never to be pierced.

I have known what it was almost to give up the belief in God ; I have certainly known what it was not to believe God in my heart, but only to believe in Him with my head. I have known what it is to believe that there was no reality in the Bible—certainly no reality in Jesus Christ. These things have come back again to me along unexpected paths, in ways which I had not discerned,—but they have come back and they are clear to me. The Bible has come back to me, through difficulty, in modern theology. Jesus Christ has come back to me in ways which I cannot express in speech. This I do know—even that light from out of darkness comes at times—a heavenly light. I know what it means when the poet says that the heart has felt ; I know what it means to feel in my heart the active presence of the love of God that has come to me through Jesus Christ.

I am fully aware that to very many the authority—the ordinary teaching—of Jesus Christ seems a limitation. In the first place the evidence rests upon a superficial basis,—upon, for instance, the verbal, the absolute, inspiration of Scripture ; upon the argument from miracle, and from such evidence. These are matters which do not concern me at all. I am fully prepared to admit that there are historical

questions in the New Testament, even, which are yet to be solved by closer and higher scholarship ; I am fully alive to all the difficulty which has been raised in that connection ; but to me these things have ceased to possess any essential interest, because my own evidence lies deeper than that, even though it is an evidence which I cannot communicate to others. From that knowledge it seems to me that there are certain cases of the teachings in relation to Jesus Christ which have not received emphasis by the Christian Church, and which, if they were in future more generally emphasized, would very much reduce the intellectual difficulties which so many of us have felt and still feel in regard to such teachings.

In the first place emphasis has been laid upon the teaching, “ No man cometh to the Father but by me ” ; and to a few that imposes a restriction of the witness of God, the narrowing down of the evidence of God, to one personality.

To me it appeals with a totally different light ; it does not mean in that way at all. God witnesseth essentially for man. He is the immanent God ; closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet, who witnesseth in another which is but the garment of God.

But to me, without Jesus Christ, all that thought of God would have remained unvitalized and indefinite. I would have had nothing sure and certain, which, in the tangled maze of things, speaks to me clearly of the love of God. I need that human agent of communication between the human and the Divine ; need that interpretation of life, that interpretation of its



mysteries, that interpretation of my own being, which is itself the revelation of the heart of God. To me Jesus Christ is not a theological figure, not a factor in somebody's divine mathematics, not an element in an external scheme of salvation, but the unveiling of the Father's face, the audible beat of the heart of God, "the word made flesh," as John has expressed it—God Himself made flesh, in order that man, with his finite mind, might grasp it through nature and the true character and the true purposes and the true will of God ; in order that in the first course of evolution there might be introduced that vivid spiritual ideal which alone can lift the human race, which can draw men up from the brute to the spirit—lifting them by language which will not be denied by the great world to the very Father's house itself. It is to me a curtain drawn aside, so that man has looked through into the ineffable glory of heaven and beheld Him, the glory, the only begotten Son—beheld in Him the very glory of God Himself.

That is not limitation. If we look upon Jesus Christ in that light, not as coming to contradict whatever evidence in whatever religion may have been already given of the love of God, but as coming to confirm everything, coming to illuminate everything, coming to focus everything, then it is no limitation, but simply Divine sanction ; the seal is set upon all that which man has hesitatingly identified with God Himself. It is the sanction of all that is true in Buddha, all that is true in the Egyptian cult of the day, all that is true in the teachings of Confucius, all that is true in the teachings of Zoroaster ; it is the binding



together from every point in the world of all the little fragments of light,—gathering together into one great shaft broadcast that which should pierce the selfishness and darkness of the world.

In the twelfth century there lived in France a man called Henry de Suso—a mystic, whose faith later found its highest expression in the writings of John Tauler. “Friends of God” they called themselves; and in many ways they were forerunners of George Fox. Henry de Suso, a Spaniard by birth, was found one day kneeling before the image of the Virgin Mary, and as he prayed he fell into a trance, and he cried out in his prayer to the Virgin; the Child she held in her arms was manifested as a reality by stooping down and kissing him; and even as he prayed the Child took life and form, and the Virgin smiled down on the kneeling mystic; even as he prayed the heavenly kiss was imprinted upon his forehead, and for one brief moment Henry de Suso was permitted to enjoy such ecstasy. Then the dream passed. Is this simply a crude, childish Roman Catholic story? I think we have misread its meaning if we so account it. Of course, it was a dream, and of course it was not actual; but Henry de Suso was experiencing that deepest longing of the human race: he was longing for a view of the face of God; he was longing that the hand might be stretched out which should touch his heart-strings, and set those chords in motion which respond only to the deepest passion—the passion of personal devotion, and personal obedience, and personal knowledge; and, friends, believe me, our faith will remain diffuse and impotent,—our power as a

religious Church must remain short of what it might be, unless our faith and our love and our devotion, all the deepest energy of our human nature, can find a personal focus, a personal living thought of God.

And, as we advance, that thought of God revealed in Jesus Christ—does it not mean that life acquires a new significance? The ideals are then no longer misty, but vivid. The grandeur of God as it is born to us, so to speak, and upon its human side, is unfolded to us; and we know the meaning of the divine sympathy, and the divine redemption, and the divine passion. We see that it overflows our life, and carries us beyond the gates of death—that there is no end, but all seems one with the eternal love of God. It does not explain for us in scientific terms all the difficulty and the conundrums of life; it does not tell us why the stars are made or where they are made; it does not explain for us the conservation of energy; it does not explain for us the force of gravity; it does not read for us the riddle of protoplasm: it leaves these questions still to solve—but it gives us an assurance, in spite of life's difficulties, in spite of life's problems, in spite of the shadow and the darkness, that God is love. Love not cold, not passionless; it reaches out of itself, seeking to save. Our life is lifted by it out of the uncertainty which ruled the thought of the Hebrew king. We are made to feel that our lives are part of the great divine plan of which we see but a momentary glimpse, and therefore may read it wrong; through the æon God is working out His great purpose,—working it through us if we are willing to put ourselves in line with Him,—if we are willing to stand up

and say to Him, "Take my hands and use them ; take my lips and speak with them ; take my heart and use it as a lamp of love by which Thy light may shine in this dark world of selfishness."

Life is then no longer a flash in the pan ; it is no longer a hollow mockery, something at which fate laughs with a hollow laugh as we struggle and strive. It is something with a Divine meaning, with a personal tongue. Even as we believe this, and as we yield to the belief, and as we go on winning victory after victory over our selfishness by the help of God's love, even so does God's face which seemed like darkness before us, become transparent. They are no longer brazen gates ; death hath no sting and grave no victory. "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore." Physical death may come to us ; but immortality remains, and God remains, and His love remains, as shown to us in Jesus Christ ; and our work remains, no matter where, and we go on working with Him, through the æons of day, seeking to find and to realise that prayer which He taught us, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."



## GOD IN CHRIST.

[The two following papers appeared in the *Young Friends' Review* of November, 1904, and February, 1905, respectively.]

IN the history of the Christian Church we observe fluctuations in the emphasis set upon the different aspects of the work and revelation of Jesus Christ. It is as though in different ages, men have felt the need for Christ under different forms. Fundamentally, the need is always one and the same. The "Welt-schmerz" as Goethe calls it, and as a man like Romanes felt it, is at heart the craving for a personal knowledge of God, for Plato's sure raft whereon haply we may cross this world's troubled sea with hope of safe anchorage at our journey's end.

Sometimes these fluctuations of emphasis are very marked, and we see that the doctrinal teaching about Christ and his work, which has proved helpful to one generation, is a difficulty to another. This is best illustrated by the history of the doctrine of the Atonement.

The first theory of the church maintained that Christ saved men from sin by offering a ransom to Satan, and this theory prevailed as the orthodox Christian doctrine for nearly a thousand years.

It was very simple, and, in the childhood of faith, very easy to believe, but it had an obvious defect.



In the eleventh century Anselm saw that this doctrine exalted the power of Satan and set up a dual monarchy over the world, limiting the power of God. He asserted therefore that the ransom paid by Christ was paid not to Satan, but to God.

He argued that sin was a terrible offence against the infinite holiness of God. Only an infinite satisfaction could cancel it, and this, man, as a finite being, could not render. God therefore in His great mercy became man, in order that, in Christ, the infinite sacrifice or ransom might be paid.

At the time of the Reformation this doctrine was modified and expressed more directly in the terms of *criminal law*. The satisfaction due to God was thought of as *punishment*, and Christ as being punished by God for our sins.

This Reformation theory is known as the theory of *penal substitution*, and its particular defect lies in this, that it destroys the reality and freedom of Divine forgiveness.

It has been superseded by what is known as the *governmental theory*, a theory still prevalent, especially among Scotch theologians, but now losing its hold. God, it is said, cannot forgive freely without threatening the majesty of Eternal Law. This law is inexorable justice, sin is a breach of the law, the law must therefore be vindicated. Christ upon the Cross satisfied or vindicated the law on behalf of humanity, and the law, or the demands of Eternal Justice, being, so to speak, put out of court, Love had untrammelled play and God was made able to forgive freely, and of His own grace.\*

\* Of what is called the moral theory we will speak later.

For many at the present day, all these theories are painfully unreal. They fall, as it were, outside the range of the inward experience of the soul. Where they do not outrage the moral consciousness they fail to interpret the vital facts of the spiritual life.

Once, doubtless, they were real enough ; to this day some one of these statements, or some modification of them, still holds sway in many minds, still gives comfort and strength. But it is a symptom common to all denominations that an increasing proportion (probably the majority) of the younger generation regard what we loosely call *the* doctrine of the Atonement as a difficulty, rather than as a help. What conclusion are we to draw ?

Some say that this feeling of difficulty represents a wicked spirit of unbelief, but that view does not square with the facts. Many who feel the difficulty most are the most distressed at their inability to accept a belief which they are told is vital to salvation. So far from the doubters being indifferent to the person and work of Christ, there was never a time when both were more anxiously discussed.

Thoughtful people are making strenuous endeavour, and the effort is full of promise, to get behind shibboleths and merely borrowed beliefs to a vital knowledge of the truth of God.

It is quite possible that this attitude of mind may involve a change of emphasis, but that it marks a decay of faith in Jesus Christ is not true.

When we recall the striking development through which the doctrine of the Atonement has already passed we can hardly insist that the present must be the

final interpretation, nor need we be alarmed if there is evidence of further development, and even of considerable modification.

If there be any cause for alarm it lies rather in the fact that the doctrine of the Atonement, as most commonly presented, is proving, in so many cases, a barrier to the acceptance of Jesus Christ.

Our object must be, not the blind and rigid maintenance of a doctrine, at all costs and for its own sake, but the realization in the hearts of sinful men and women of the redeeming life of Christ. Doctrines are means, not ends, a fact the Church has been too slow to learn. The end transcends all doctrines and is spiritual union with God through Jesus Christ our Lord ; this is the one purpose of the Gospel, it is the one purpose of the Church of Christ.

When we are faced with such a symptom as that just described, we must endeavour sympathetically to understand just what that symptom means. We must not jump to hasty conclusions. Human needs are the same, but the intellectual outlook is extreme in its diversity. We must avoid *doctrinaire* assertions, imputations of pride or dishonesty to those who differ from us. We must not imagine that to insist upon a view which has been helpful in the past, or to ourselves, is necessarily to help another. What is clear to us may be dark to him. He may need to approach from another side, to seek his interpretation in other formulæ.

We must begin by seeking a common ground. What is that common ground ? It is experience. The sense of sin and of shortcoming, the spiritual

loneliness of alienation from God, the longing to know Him, to be pure, to be free from the miserable limitations and checks of our faulty nature, our selfishness, our irritability, our false pride, our unsociableness, from the deeper sins of the flesh,—these are the lot of all, the experience of all. Every man in measure knows, in the secret of his heart, the craving to escape, and the power of evil, and, *substantially*, the way of escape is the same for all. Surrender to the highest, the holiest influence we know, repentance, a hearty shame for the past, a loathing for all that is alien to the purity of mind and soul, and with the growing love of Goodness, the incoming of the *power* of Goodness, the gathering sense of internal peace and unity.

Yes ! The substantial method and reward of salvation must be the same for every man. The solidarity of the human race demands this.

But is there then no place and importance to be given to the mental apprehension of Divine truth ? Of course there is. We shall come to that presently. My immediate object is to drive controversy back to the true beginnings of unity and understanding. For although it is true that to see truth clearly is an incalculable reinforcement in the warfare with evil, it is not true that to think correctly is absolutely necessary to salvation. In shaping our beliefs we must deal with facts, not with abstract theorems. If, for example, we can express a spiritual truth of our personal experience when we say that we accept Jesus Christ as our Saviour, then we are pronouncing the fact and completeness of our spiritual victory as we could not otherwise pronounce it. But to say this



is not to pronounce a dogma, an assertion of the hide-bound theologian, it is the statement of a practical truth that can be tested by the history of the individual and of the Church.

And mark this ! it is a statement that has remained true through all the vicissitudes of the doctrine of the Atonement. Those who believed that Christ paid his ransom to the Devil, those who believed that Christ paid his ransom to God, those who believed that Christ was punished for our sins, those who believed that Christ vindicated Eternal Justice and liberated God to forgive us freely, and those who feel the unreality of one and all of these statements, unite on this common ground, that they have found as a living experience that Jesus Christ was their Saviour.

Here we have a hint as to the direction in which some measure of intellectual unity may be found, or the lines upon which a helpful statement of Divine truth may be built up. When we find ourselves at variance, let us cease from chopping logic and go back to the facts of real life, for it is these facts and not the theories of schoolmen that need interpretation. Nay ! the schoolmen themselves are to be studied and respected only where they seek such interpretation in the spirit of truth.

The gravamen of the charge so often laid against theology, the reason for the contempt poured upon it, especially by men of scientific habits of thought, is to be found in its frequent remoteness from the pressing difficulties and demands of the soul. The subject matter of theology cannot, as some nevertheless believe, be studied in vacuo. It is too much entangled



in the heartstrings of humanity to be separated and regarded apart.

In any discussion, I repeat, the difficulties and demands of the soul must be our starting point. The history of the Christian Church would have been spared the blemish of many fruitless controversies had men been willing to turn from the arid deserts of scholastic disputation to consider with earnestness what I may call the spiritual psychology of the human heart.

Let us then, in relation to this difficulty illustrated by the doctrine of the Atonement, establish some of the elementary conditions which limit the whole question of belief, recognising that for those who feel the difficulty of past or current interpretations, a frontal attack, so to speak, may not prove the shortest way to victory.

As I understand it, the Atonement, using the term to cover what is called the plan of salvation, has become a stumbling block to many earnest people who desire above all else to know God in Christ. The difficulty is aggravated by the effect upon the whole body of Christian thought of the scientific doctrine of evolution, and of critical Biblical scholarship, working in harmony with the study of comparative religion.

The doctrine of the Atonement is not so much doubted, as felt to be unreal. Where doubt exists it goes deeper, playing rather around the validity of Christ's claim to reveal the Father. Indeed the real point at issue is this:—Granted, as most will grant, that Jesus was an historic personality, was he,—without pressing for a subtle philosophical determina-

tion of the meaning of divinity—was he, as we practically understand the word, divine ?

In attempting an answer, let us get further back. Look where you will in history, you find religion. Sometimes faint, sometimes rich and deep, but always there. This is a fact—not a theory, not a doctrine. Vague or clear, pure or coarse, spiritual or sensual, gentle or cruel, in some form, expression is given to a common human instinct, the instinct to look beyond man for the interpretation of life. Are we to argue that this instinct was misplaced—that it corresponds to no reality, that there is no interpretation of life beyond humanity,—no fourth dimension? Apart from the fact that such a statement would be an unscientific assumption, there is that in the cumulative experience of humanity which not only bids, but literally *compels* us to assert (perhaps it may be with only a dumb conviction) that there *is* a reality corresponding to the instinct of religion—a reality to which we can pray. If it were not so, then, greater than the problem of the existence of evil, would be the problem of the existence of prayer. That reality to which we pray, the reality outside ourselves, we call God.

But history tells us more than this. Every religion credits the supreme power with supreme qualities. In the grosser stages of consciousness, and in cases of moral retrogression, the supreme power is often supremely bad, but the grand truth that emerges is this,—that, as humanity progresses from lower to higher intelligence, the supreme power stands forth more and more supremely good. The presence of evil may cloud the vision. Often in ignorance or

despair Evil is throned in the sky, but slowly and surely Good is recognised as the victorious factor in the great Struggle of Life. In the belief of man, Goodness and God become one.

This is a fact, not a theory, not a doctrine ; it is a fact of history.

But again history tells us more than this. In the gathered biography of the human race, in the *vie intime* of the human soul, there is nothing more pathetic, nothing more persistent, than that of which we spoke at the commencement of this discussion,—the passionate longing to know personally this reality to which we pray.

What are we to say to this longing ? Are we to say that God is good, and in the same breath that His goodness is unapproachable, incommunicable ? Think what supreme goodness means,—has come to mean as a historic fact. It is just the reverse of unapproachable and incommunicable. What are the terms we associate with goodness ? They are at once Love, unselfishness, pity, sympathy, the spirit of self-sacrifice. Is the supreme goodness less than these ? Is it not rather their sum ? For goodness, as the world has come through long travail to know it, is not an abstraction, it is not passive. To talk of goodness as impersonal, inactive, is to destroy the meaning of the word. It simply cannot be either. Goodness can only be personal.\* The Cheshire cat could fade away till only the grin was left. But that was in a pro-

\* I mean, of course, personal as implying volition, consciousness, individuality ; not mere bodily shape, the temporary vehicle for the expression of personality.

fessedly nonsense book. A man cannot fade away till only his goodness is left. He may and does when he dies leave the memory of his goodness behind him, and the memory lives in another person, bearing fruit as goodness in his life, by the power of example, but it does not and cannot survive as an abstraction.

But if our conviction be true, that there is an outward reality, and if the accumulated testimony of the human heart be also true that this outward reality is good, how can we, in the light of this experience and testimony, proceed to declare that this outward reality is one with which we cannot communicate, and that God is a silent God ?

We should not only be guilty of a contradiction in terms, we should be making an assumption, rather than stating a fact, following the theologian in the very practice for which we condemned him.

Moreover, it would be an assumption denied by an overwhelming multitude, a great cloud of witnesses. Sinners and saints, men in the miry clay, and men on the mountains of vision, men who suffered and men who rejoiced, every sort, every condition, an unbroken apostolic succession, rise to refute you. "To me, and to me, my Lord hath spoken. I have seen His face, and my heart glories in His love."

This is a fact, not a theory, not a doctrine, it is a fact of human history.

But how has He spoken ? The saint knows and can tell you best in his own language, tell you as Madame Guyon tells you in her Autobiography, or John Woolman, lying on his bed, sick of pleurisy. From all lands and all ages, divine voices call to you.



History, did you only know it, is the voice of God, many tongued.

But is there no commanding voice, none that gathers up the scattered messages of all the times of God in one clear call? Yes! there is one. In these last days God has spoken to us by His Son.

Ah! but you say, this indeed is assumption. Now you depart from fact and enter the region of theology. How can you defend this statement? The Gospels are challenged; taken as historical evidence, they must be regarded as *sub-judice*. You are arguing from inadequate premises.

But I say, No! you are wrong. We accept our self-imposed conditions, We keep close to the facts of the heart's experience,—the final and valid test.

The witness for Christ does not rest solely, nor in one sense even primarily, upon the Gospels. Grant them the fallible writings of fallible men, grant interpolations, grant them not history in the strict modern sense. The witness does not stop there, it stretches unbroken through twenty centuries and is never clearer than to-day. Cut out the Gospels and you cleave a chasm in history that nothing else can fill, you are faced by living forces that only Jesus Christ can explain.

First judge Christ by the effect he has produced, is producing. Compare, check that effect, the forces he has liberated, with the best the world has to offer you apart from him.

Then judge the claim which the Gospels make for him.



In an article in the *Contemporary* for August, Dugald Macfadyen writes :—

“ The Gospel which is the distinctive contribution of Christianity to the world’s history, is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Gospel. It is not His teaching alone, though that is full of glad tidings ; it is not His death alone for the sin of the world, though His death as the means of man’s reconciliation with God is included in the Gospel ; it is not even His rising again, though by it, life and immortality are brought to light ; His teaching, His cross and His resurrection find their ground and explanation in what He was—they are the exposition and unfolding of His personality. The new fact which is itself both God’s spell, the Divine word to and in Humanity, and the good news to men, is that, within the limits of the great human family, there has been one life, one personality, in whom the perfect relation of humanity to God has been achieved, and the eternal character and inner nature of God revealed.”

I must be forgiven for so long a quotation. It takes me to the limit of my space. I hope on some future occasion to go further, and discuss the relation of this line of thought to the difficulty of the Atonement.

If history is true, God has spoken in language that we can understand. He is not a silent God because He is supremely good. Nay, He so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son. This is the testimony of the Gospels. It is the testimony of martyrs sealed in their blood, of wayfaring folk whose sainthood no *Acta Sanctorum* has enshrined in illuminated text. It is the gathering witness of twenty centuries. Will you set yourself against it, or will you “ taste and see ” ?

Will you, with Browning, acknowledge in your heart the combined strength of power and love, and repeat after him what he, a modern of the moderns, has written with passionate conviction :—

“ I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ,  
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee,  
All questions in the earth and out of it,  
And has so far advanced thee to be wise.” \*

\* “A Death in the Desert.”

## GOD IN CHRIST.—II. THE PRODIGAL SON.

**I**N the first paper, of which this is the sequel, we defined love as necessarily active and personal. Love cannot be abstract in the sense of passive non-personal existence, or as apart from volition and object. That would be to state a contradiction in terms. Love is essentially social. It is the expression of a spiritual force, radiating from a personal centre, and having its motive in persons. If then we believe that God is love, we believe not in a passive God, indifferent to human suffering and need, but in a personal God who cares for every individual soul, who is ever in the intensity of His sympathy seeking to make Himself known, to make His redeeming and healing power felt.

Love, as we understand it in the intercourse of human life, is the sum, to name no other qualities, of tenderness, pity, sympathy, thoughtfulness, insight, unselfishness, self-abnegation. In its highest expression it is pure and holy, and in that form it is recognised as the greatest power in the world. Men possessed with it are called saints. In some communities they are worshipped. This love, which we know in history and experience, we find in the Gospels personified, active, and powerful, in Jesus Christ ; we find it here indeed in the purest form known to

human consciousness. Moreover Jesus puts forth the tremendous claim that He and the Father are one, that in other words love as we see it in Him is the *same* in character as the love of God Himself. It is true that Jesus says "The Father is greater than I"; that the Creator with His infinite power and knowledge is greater than the Creator self-limited in the flesh, but the love of God is not different *in kind* from the love of Jesus. Nay, Jesus is the outcome of that love. "For God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten son"—the scripture is familiar to us. There is nothing wonderful in this if we believe that God is love. Man could not know God except within the limits of human consciousness, he could not identify God except by identifying traits of character in Him similar in kind to those which he knew in himself. Jesus is the identification mark of God. The terms "abstract" and "infinite" so often applied to God in philosophical argument are really incomprehensible—they are the letter X in the algebraical equation, useful till the solution is found. When we say we can believe in an abstract, infinite God we are really juggling with our intellects. We can as a strict matter of fact do nothing of the sort. We do not believe in God until we get some human hold upon Him, and realise Him in terms which come within the range of our actual experience. If we can accept the quotation with which I closed my last article, and say with Macfadyen that "within the limits of the great human family there has been one life, one personality, in whom the perfect relation of humanity to God has been achieved, and the eternal character and inner nature

of God revealed," then we have gone a long way towards the solution of the Atonement problem. Jesus is the bridge between man and God, the necessary means to the fullest knowledge of the Divine nature. Without God interpreted in human terms, God would be forever unknowable to the human mind ; and one great fact which emerges from the Gospels, where Jesus as the interpretation of God's character and purpose, is Himself the Gospel, is the identity in kind between the love of God and pure, unselfish human love. If Jesus and the Father are one, then God's relations to us are in the spirit of Jesus—they are in the spirit of a good human father's relations with his children. We have to do, not with an "unknowable first cause," but with a God we *can* know and understand, and as the unity of Jesus with God is grasped, and the identity of pure love in the Divine and human life is realised, the harsh judge throned in a distant celestial court becomes forever an impossible conception.

Let us, then, accepting Jesus as God expressed in human terms, and identifying the spirit of Jesus with the spirit of God, examine the Gospel view of human relationship. Tenderness, pity, sympathy, thoughtfulness, insight, unselfishness, self-abnegation—all are there. The love of Jesus is a love we can identify in human experience,—and remember Jesus *is* the Gospel.

Then how does this affect the doctrine of the Atonement ?

We shall soon discover if we turn to the story of the Prodigal Son. Theologians with a pre-conceived theory to defend will tell us that this parable is theologically incomplete, that it does not give us the whole



Gospel. It is at any rate absolutely harmonious with the whole spirit of the Gospel, and unlike some texts the true meaning of which it is difficult to define, it so expresses truth that the meaning it is intended to convey is left beyond doubt. It is neither an isolated fragment, like an uprooted text, nor an erratic boulder out of place in its environment. On the contrary it expresses the spirit of the Gospel with rare tenderness and force, and with an application deeply practical, intimate and real. If the parable of the Prodigal Son has any meaning, it sets forth the character and the conditions of Divine forgiveness—the relation of God to sinful man. Accustomed as we are to elaborate theological theories, based upon the teaching of the early fathers, Augustine, Anselm or Paul, the extraordinary simplicity of the Parable, if we are able to read it without *arrière pensée*, comes home to us as a startling fact. The prodigal sins, spends his substance in riotous living in a far country. He repents bitterly, sincerely, and returns to his father's house. What happens? Is there talk of a ransom, of an account to be balanced between love and justice, of the need for punishment, or for a substitute upon whom punishment must fall? Nothing of the kind. The father clasps the prodigal to his breast, a feast is prepared, and as if to throw into deliberate prominence the unconditional acceptance of the returned penitent we have the episode of the elder brother. And the whole is so organic with the spirit and teaching of Jesus, that it is impossible for us to suppose that the ordinary theological elaborations with which we are familiar were accidentally omitted. They would be obviously

out of place, there is no room for them in the story, they would be foreign both to its substance and form. I venture to suggest that in any reconstruction or development of the doctrine of the Atonement the story of the Prodigal Son will have a larger influence than it has hitherto enjoyed. And the more so because the teaching of the parable corresponds with experience. In the last article I spoke of the test of experience as all important, of the need for checking and testing our religious formulæ by the acknowledged facts of the inner life. Let us check and test this parable by a common human counterpart. Imagine a good father who has a son he loves. This son, the apple of his eye, breaks away from the home life, with its pure atmosphere and influence, he goes, say to London, gives himself up to vice, squanders his money in gambling and drink. At last, overtaken by satiety, the unfailing Nemesis of self-pleasing, his heart fails him. He realises in a sudden flash all the horror of those wasted years. There rises before him the vision of home, of the sorrowing father, the mother who fondled him and dreamed great things for her darling son. Blinded with hot tears of repentance and shame he returns to fling himself, a broken man, at his father's feet, crying "I have sinned, receive me still." What wise and good father, assured of the sincerity of the repentance, would hesitate to give full play to the pent-up yearning of his long years of anguished waiting, as he drew his lost sheep back into the fold. "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?"

But the answer of the theologian and the moralist will at once be that such forgiveness is too easy. Here, in this parable, we have the basis of the moral theory of the Atonement, and the tendency is to discountenance it as making too light of sin. "On this basis," it may be said, "you can have your fill of the lusts and pleasures of life, and when weary of carnal things you have only to turn round, ask to be forgiven, and all will be well." "*Only to turn round.*" There lies the weakness of all objection to this view of the love and forgiveness of God. Only to turn round! He who has tried it knows how hard it is, he who has done it knows that repentance is a fierce flame torturing the soul as it sears its gaping wounds. Let us put the matter in plain and homely language. I have a secret sin; at the heart of my life there remains an unconquered selfishness, some untrampled lust of the flesh that still reigns over my will. It comes between me and God, or if you will between me and the self I know I ought to be. Say what I like, do what I can, so long as that sin is master, so long there lurks an unrest in my soul. I am not at peace; outwardly gay enough, in my heart of hearts I feel an intolerable loneliness. I know I am without God. His love cannot reach me, I cannot reach Him—because of that sin. The self I ought to be is beyond me. I see it but try as I will I cannot come at it. Let us assume that by prayer, or if that is a term that needs interpreting, then by the conscious devotion to the life of God as revealed in Jesus, the concentration of all good desires in me upon Jesus as my ideal, that the power of goodness within me gains the upper hand, and I am able to

conquer the last citadel of the lower self. What then ? I shall observe two things. First, that the redeeming quality of goodness grew in exact proportion with the growing intensity of my shame and sorrow for the sin I longed to flee. Second, that when, so to speak, the balance tipped over and the sin lost its power, the tortures of penitence ceased, and there came into my soul a sense of peace and unity unknown before. This is a real analysis of actual experience. What is it but the story of the Prodigal ? Penitence is the return to the Father's house, forgiveness the entrance into the peace of the Father's home. The condition of forgiveness is penitence—a condition involving primarily an inward fact and change, and there is absolutely no other condition whatever. The means God has taken to provoke repentance I leave to the next and concluding paper ; here I am only concerned with the *conditions of Divine forgiveness*—and I repeat that if the parable of the Prodigal Son has any significance and any validity, its testimony is emphatic that penitence is the one key to the door of heaven. But you may say, is it possible to meet the pressing sense of the need for pardon—pardon for past sins as felt, for instance, by John Bunyan—in this simple fashion ? There are many who will feel that their own penitence is *not* enough. Let us examine this matter closely. It is one of great importance and bears upon a current fact often noted—I mean the fact that this sense of the need for pardon, even among earnest Christians, does not take the same outward form as it once did. What does the sense of pardon actually mean ? When we have stripped off the symbolic phraseology of religion



we find it means a sense of harmony between the human soul and God—a measurable sense of unity between our human will and the recognised purposes of God as interpreted by conscience. It may take the form of quiet resignation under suffering, or active service for humanity,—but in any case its mark is faithfulness to that view of God and of life which we see and know in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The barrier of sin which separates the soul from God, from the realisation of the higher view of life, has been removed, the love of the Heavenly Father has free play in the heart to which it has found entrance, the soul is growing closer to Him, it is being made in His image, because it has chosen His view of life, His thought, His will. Penitence means surrendering the citadel of self, and at once when we pull down our flag and open the gates, the regiments of heaven, without *pour parlé* or hesitation, take possession and man the fortress. Forgiveness does not imply a change in God but a change in man. If the Gospels are to be trusted, God is Love. If God is Love, He is actively, continually, earnestly seeking to open up communication with us. Sin bars the way. When sin is removed His love pours in upon us. There is no question of a legal transaction. We are not here in the law courts, but in the region of moral realities. Divine forgiveness follows upon human penitence, *i.e.*, upon the destruction of sin, as day follows night, automatically, inevitably, by the inner laws of His being. *Our own penitence is adequate, God asks nothing else.* If we doubt this we have mis-read the message of Jesus. We have drawn, perhaps from Calvin, perhaps through misunder-



standing Paul, a dark, gloomy view of God. Intellectual misconception, no less than sin, may come between us, and the sense of pardoning love. It is because the shadow of a misinterpreted God is passing away, because His Fatherhood is growing clearer in the coming light, that this anguished sense of the need for pardon, even after penitence has broken or cleansed the heart, is less and less phenomenal of the earnest religious life.

In a little book recently published by Auguste Sabatier, entitled "The Atonement and Modern Culture," the following strongly worded passage occurs :—

"The gravest consequence of the old judicial and legal point of view was that it introduced an irreducible dualism into the Christian conception of God ; that is to say, that it destroyed the conception of the Father revealed by Jesus. In fact, men have imagined an internal conflict between His justice and His mercy, so that He was not able to exercise the one without offending the other. Christ instead of being the Saviour of men, became an intradivine mediator, whose essential office it was to reconcile the hostile attributes within the Godhead, and to ensure peace and unity within God Himself."

There is profound truth in this judgment. We must approach every theory of the Atonement from the standpoint of God's Fatherhood, and no view which obscures that cardinal truth can be held consistent with the Gospel of Jesus.

But perhaps those who have felt the stern side of truth and who see in modern life painful evidence of moral relaxation and indifference to sin, may still hold that the parable of the Prodigal Son is inadequate because it does not present the stern judgments of

God. "God is Love," they say, "but God *is* Justice too." True. Yet is there here a complete misapprehension. What is God's judgment? It is not for a moment to be compared to the sentence pronounced by a judge in court. It is not an outward fact concerned with outward laws and taking effect *after the event*. It is continuous, inward, the inevitable counterpart of every sin. That view which piles up the moral account to be squared at some future date, in some great cataclysm when the world is to come to an end does not explain the facts or meet the needs of experience. Every day is a judgment day. Every sin carries its own punishment. So long as sin reigns in our heart, whether it be pride, lust, avarice, or any other form of selfishness, there is no real peace, no centre of repose, but the cark of unsatisfied craving, the bitterness of disappointment, the weariness of satiety, loneliness of spirit, the helpless dependence upon physical conditions and surroundings, the terror of death. Alienation from God is the punishment of sin, and alienation from God is hell. So long as we persist in sin there can be no forgiveness, for this alienation is a moral, not an artificial fact, and a moral change can alone put an end to it. The wages of sin is death. At every step in the whole problem of man's relation to God we must keep the moral realities before us. We must keep close to experience, to the facts of the inner life.

To say that God is love, that He forgives the penitent freely, instantly, is not to weaken the claims of eternal justice or lessen the terrible consequences of sin. The condition of penitence carries with it, as

we have shown, the necessity for the destruction of the power of sin, and as God's punishments are remedial, not vindictive, the very fact of penitence blots out the past. With penitence the first object of God's love HAS BEEN ATTAINED, the sinner has been placed in the right attitude towards Him, his latent powers of good have been liberated, and are free to grow heavenward. He who accepts the Parable of the Prodigal Son as embracing the whole Gospel, no less than the strictest theologian of the old school, who paints the terrors of an everlasting torment, are at one in insisting upon the condition of penitence as absolute. God does not, by His nature He *cannot*, yield in this. To love Him and know Him, we must have some points of contact, some likeness to Him, our aims in life must be those He would choose for us, our thoughts, character, will, must be as His. Sin is the deliberate choice of other aims, contrary thoughts, alien character and hostile will. Penitence is the abandonment of sin. These are the moral facts of the situation. They depend upon that which is woven into the very tissue of our being and the very nature of God. We cannot alter these conditions, and unless God can change His nature, neither can He. Here Love and Justice are one. In holding the moral view of the Atonement we may readily grant that the irrevocableness of the moral law needs to have more emphasis set upon it than is now customary, an emphasis which shall in no wise obscure the vision of the Fatherhood of God, but shall throw into more vivid light the terrible loss which sin involves.

In his posthumous work, "The Gospel and Human Life," Canon Ainger deplotes the comparative absence

of contrition, and traces the modern indifference to public worship to this source.

“Have we learned to sorrow?” he asks. “If not, the remedy is not to look continually into ourselves, analysing and weighing and wondering if we are this or that. Let us look outside ourselves at the Person who can alone win our highest love and awaken our deepest regret.”

This passage might suitably have introduced the next article of this series, but I quote it here, for it puts a question appropriate to our discussion. There is joy in life, deep joy, legitimate even when sensuous, as the old Greek love of being, of the salt spray, the purple sea, and the green hills of Hellas: there is a deep joy in faith, the joy of vision and victory; and yet in a most real sense these joys have their justification and their root in the sorrow of the contrite heart. There is room yet for the prophet’s voice calling to penitence, room yet for the cry of the Psalmist, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”





## MAN'S RELATION TO GOD.

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### INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The best introduction to the last series of addresses written by John Wilhelm Rowntree is to be found in the following letter, written to three Friends in Manchester, Croydon and Darlington meetings respectively, expressing his desire to give the lectures in those meetings. The letter is dated 17. II. 1905.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In offering as a matter of individual concern six consecutive Sunday evening addresses, to be delivered in the autumn at . . . , I should have been glad to do so verbally at your Preparative Meeting. This, however, is impossible, and I therefore write you fully in explanation of my offer, that you may if you think fit, lay this letter before your meeting.

I have for some time felt a desire to express in a form less fugitive than an isolated address, such a measure of Gospel truth as I have personally been enabled to grasp. You may call the proposed addresses a statement of the Quaker view of life, for they are a Quaker's view, and I believe in harmony with the inner conception of Truth which has come to our branch of the Universal Church; but my desire is not so much to emphasise the denominational label nor even to confine myself to a Quaker audience, as to reach a wide circle of thoughtful people of all denominations or of none. I am, if your meeting is willing to give me the opportunity, prepared, on my side, to make the weekly journey without cost to yourselves.

Briefly my concern is as follows :—I feel that our activities as a religious society are running out freely in missions and Adult Schools, and but scantily in service among the more thoughtful and educated. Of course I take no exception to Adult School work whatever, it has my warmest sympathy, but I do feel the need of a wiser balance and distribution of power, and am obliged to recognise that there are classes more difficult perhaps to reach than the artizan, but needing help no less, and which, if consecrated to the Higher Life, are equipped by means and leisure for a service that others cannot render.

More than this, I feel we need a more definite and focussed expression of Gospel truth, interpreted in the language of to-day, and in terms within the range of moral reality, if we are to win men to our fellowship, and find in our social work that centre of living faith which can alone give it permanence and power.

Under a sense of this need, I devoted, last year, some weeks to the careful preparation of six addresses, in which I have endeavoured as far as I could and as guidance was given me, to state that view of life and of man's relation to God which was real in my own experience. I laid this concern before my own meeting and the series was accepted.\* Six consecutive Sunday evenings were devoted to them, the ordinary meetings for worship being set aside. Posters were placarded and cards sent to all suitable people, invitations also being given verbally. The attendance, apart from small fluctuations due to the weather, was encouraging,—the Meeting-house being practically full. The visitors were mostly of the thoughtful class, and many attended the whole series. I think on the last occasion especially, we drew very close together in the solemn devotional silence which concluded the meeting. While the majority were undoubtedly educated persons of the middle class, I was glad to see that the Adult Schools were represented.

\* One, as explained at the end of this letter, was given by another Friend.

The scheme of the addresses is as follows :—

The first paper, entitled "What is Worship?" dealt with the present indifference to public worship, its significance, the efforts of the churches to meet it, the true meaning of worship, its personal character, the work of worship and communion with God.

The second paper supposes the difficulty of the ordinary man whose thought of God is indefinite, and the question is asked "May we believe in God?" I attempt to sketch the main philosophical arguments, to indicate their weakness, and finally to treat of the relation of the message and personality of Jesus Christ to the need for a personal view of God.

This brings me to the difficulty of the historical records. In the third paper I ask "Is the Bible Inspired?" and after attempting a statement of the true meaning of inspiration I endeavour to state the true line of approach to the final problem of the basis of belief.

Having cleared the ground as far as I am able I state in the fourth paper what I conceive to be the "Message of Jesus to the Individual"; in the fifth paper the "Message of Jesus to the State," and in the final paper, which I have named "Faith and Life," I made an appeal for personal religion and prayer.

I have written thus at length not from any idea that these papers have any special merit, but because I feel that it is only fair to you that if I make this large request I should properly explain myself. I may say that at Scarborough a friend sat by me in the gallery, opened with a short passage of Scripture and explained the nature of the closing devotional pause. The meetings were  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hours in length—the paper and preliminary reading an hour and the devotional ending about a quarter of an hour. There was no singing, though I personally have no objection to an opening hymn, which, with a number of strangers present, is often more "settling." I prefer, however, for the conclusion to be silence, with opportunity for vocal prayer.

I may mention that at York, where I hope to give the

addresses, the meetings will probably be in the afternoon, and possibly written questions will be allowed, to be dealt with at a special meeting at the end or at the beginning of the following address. I think it is essential that these papers, which are closely interlocked, should be given consecutively.

I need hardly add that I make this proposal with a full consciousness of the very real shortcoming and limitation inevitable in the weakness of the human instrument. I can only trust that I have rightly interpreted the Father's will in desiring to take up this service, and leave the matter with your meeting, in the full confidence that if you do not feel easy to take up the proposal, it will be in right ordering.

Very sincerely your friend,

J. WILHELM ROWNTREE.

[A break occurred in the proposed series of six lectures, owing to the sudden death of J. W. R.'s brother-in-law, Ernest Grace, of Bristol. The third lecture as planned, on the Inspiration of the Bible, was never actually written. A Friend kindly filled this gap in place of the lecturer.]

## I.

### WHAT IS WORSHIP ?

*Scripture portion*—Psalm cvii. 1-22.

I SUPPOSE everyone has a ready answer to such a simple question. Is it not clear that public worship is a commonplace of our social life ?

Scarce a village without its hoary church with squat tower or tapering spire, grey with the weathering storms of five hundred winters. Scarce a village indeed without a chapel severely plain, its bleak windows and denominational credentials carved above a porch of uncertain style, its air of halting hospitality, yet reminiscent none the less of fervid revival and the strong cries of fearful or victorious souls. And in the towns a wealth of architectural piety from massive cathedral, well grounded in its social prestige, to the tin tabernacle of some struggling mission.

I am convinced, however, in spite of this seemingly adverse evidence, that my question is far from superfluous. What *is* worship ?

We take commonplaces for granted, but we do not always understand them.

Buildings for social worship may be frequent, but so is the neglect of social worship. Indeed this neglect is so striking that a great newspaper has been at pains to take a census of the worshippers of Greater London, a census which was in progress during eleven



months, from November, 1902, to November, 1903 (the month of August being excepted).

Four thousand and twenty-six places of worship, doing duty for a population of over 6,240,000 souls, claimed the attention of the enumerators. Four in five of that number were found not to attend at any place of public worship, and in a ponderous volume of 518 pages the results and lessons of this great investigation are stated and discussed.

Nor is this all. The third series of Charles Booth's *magnum opus*, "The Life and Labour of London People," devotes seven substantial volumes to the Religious Influences of the metropolis in the closing decade of the nineteenth century. And in these volumes the subject of public worship is continually under notice.

Perhaps if we briefly examine these two works for the facts they give and the opinions they express, we shall clear the ground for a more profitable consideration of the larger question with which this discussion opened.

In considering then, the subsidiary question, "Why do men neglect social worship?" I propose first rapidly to summarize the conclusions of Charles Booth.

He gives testimony at the outset to the power of conviction. Those who feel that they hold the truth and feel constrained to spread the knowledge of it are "comparatively few in number, but," says Mr. Booth, "the amount of work which they do is marvellous, and its influence on the lives of the whole population very great."

He proceeds, however, to dispel what he calls an "optimistic delusion common among religious bodies," namely, that all men are open to receive the Gospel, as presented, that is, by the organised Christian Churches.

He points to the confusion of ideas upon this point. One clergyman says that London should be treated as wholly heathen and worked from a central mission ; another that all London is on the contrary thirsting for visitation. A third supposes that the people might be won over if the Bishop of Stepney had a Palace in the East End !

There is, however, a painful sense of failure on the part of the workers. Even the optimistic are despairing when it comes to results, and make strenuous efforts to meet the situation.

But they appear to base their hopes very largely upon what may be called "mechanical contrivances." There must be novelty. The people, they say, are ready enough for the Gospel, but the pill must be coated with sugar. The *Tit Bits* style must be cultivated in the sermons, and costly buildings of a confectionery type of architecture must be encouraged because they are supposed to attract. And yet these very "contraptions" are inadequate for success. Be all things to all men is the motto. "Alas," says Mr. Booth, "they are only all things to themselves and *something* to quite a narrow circle of sympathisers."

Moreover, cheap successes are ephemeral and in their result degrading.

"Highly coloured appeals," says Mr. Booth, "bring in a golden return, treats and blankets swell the list of

mothers and children on the books of the undertaking, and above all the sectarian spirit binds and braces together the energies of the band of workers." But "when the poor are made the subjects of such ignoble competition the result is apt to show itself in cringing poverty with all its evils, lack of independence, hypocrisy and lies, accompanied by the contempt of those who stand aside."

The result is that between the churches and the people there is a want of respect.

"The churches have come to be regarded"—I quote Mr. Booth—"as the resorts of the well-to-do, and of those who are willing to accept the charity and patronage of people who are better off than themselves."

Viewing the situation entirely from the standpoint of the people, it is stated that the churches are regarded as insincere.

"The spirit of self-sacrifice inculcated in theory, is not observed among, or believed to be practised by, the members of those churches in any particular degree, and this inconsistency is very critically and severely judged. The clergy and ministers have no authority that is recognised, but their professional character remains, and owing to it they perhaps lose influence. It is accounted their business to preach, they being paid to do it. . . . A life of voluntary poverty, seems to be the only road to the confidence of the people in this matter."

A minister who is known for his humanitarian interests has influence, but, so says our investigator, "his doctrinal teaching carries no weight."

A liberalized form of Christianity as preached by some makes no better headway than the narrowly

orthodox, and the doctrinal bickerings between the sects have a disastrous consequence in hindering the appeal of the Gospel.

Outside the church, the great reason for non-attendance at worship is indifference to the spiritual life. The great mass of men have more leisure but religion hardly gains. The maw of pleasure is not easy to fill. The appetite grows. Sunday is increasingly regarded as a day of recreation.

“What then is happening ?” says Mr. Booth. “It is claimed that changes making for improvement are in progress amongst the working classes, that habits are becoming softened, that the influence of education is making itself felt, that intelligence is spreading ; are then their interests becoming more political or more social, more intellectual or more material ? No conclusive answer can be given. We only know that such interests as trade unions and friendly societies, co-operative effort, temperance propaganda and politics (including socialism), with newspapers and even books, are filling, in the mental life of the average working man, a larger space than in the past, and with some may be taking a place which might have been otherwise occupied by religious interests ; but this usurpation and engrossment of the mind may probably be asserted much more confidently of pleasure, amusement, hospitality and sport.” To this cautious statement Mr. Booth, adds :—“Amongst all the reasons for abstaining from public worship, genuine, conscientious, reasoned unbelief takes a very small place.” Indifference, however, is the distinguishing mark of no particular class, it runs through all. On the other hand, “if those not seriously concerned far outnumber the rest, those deeply touched are drawn from all classes. It is the form of expression, rather than the profounder spiritual development of religion, that is affected by class, neither the highest mental training, nor its entire absence, leads particularly either to or from religion.”



And finally, for the hint is pregnant with meaning, our author remarks *à propos* of the abstention particularly of the working classes, "that it is to the warmth of welcome that success is mostly to be attributed when success is secured at all."

So much for Charles Booth. I have endeavoured in this severely compressed summary to make Mr. Booth's statement as far as possible in his own words, but where from necessity I have departed from them, I have been careful to reflect his own values and his own meaning.

We turn now to the printed report of the religious Census, an enquiry of more recent date.

All of Mr. Booth's deductions are not accepted in this volume. That is hardly likely, for the influence of religion is difficult to estimate and easy to misinterpret. But in general the conclusions are the same.

Again we open with the testimony to the power of strong convictions.

"Wherever," says the editor, Mr. Mudie Smith, "Wherever there is the right man in the pulpit, there are few if any empty pews. By the right man I do not mean a genius. On the contrary the preacher may be an 'extraordinarily ordinary' man, so long as he possesses strong convictions, keen sympathies, and a magnetic personality."

Again there is the sense of failure and the desire to alter the mechanism of public worship. The same writer tells us that the second lesson of the census is "that the buildings we erect in the future must be the antithesis of those now in existence." . . . "Cold, repellant stone walls, forbidding divisive pews, some cushioned and others bare," . . . "must give



place to large, handsome central halls, well lit and well ventilated, furnished throughout with seats of one pattern, which permit of no arbitrary divisions based on class distinctions." And not only must the outward appearance and fittings of the place of worship be altered but a strong plea is put in for an institutional church and for open-air preaching.

Percy Alden adds his testimony to the value of the "simply furnished, brightly lighted and well warmed" hall, and protests that the average chapel and mission room reminds him of nothing so much as "a mortuary." He would have them all pulled down and rebuilt, and, like Mr. Mudie Smith, pleads for the institutional character,—for concerts, socials, entertainments, lectures, in the same halls, during the week.

"The people," says Mr. Alden, "are tired of being preached at," and he quotes Meredith with satisfaction, "We all of us have a parlous lot too much pulpit in us." His ideal church is "a large, spacious building seating at least one thousand people, with a good organ, a platform instead of a pulpit, chairs instead of pews, surrounded by class-rooms and games rooms, with at least one smaller hall at the side, etc."

Mr. Walter Warren, writing for North London, supports Mr. Alden's views, and in his own way testifies to the need for conviction.

"What infinite, untold loss," he exclaims, "lies at the doors of dull, incompetent pastors, the men who are lazy in body and brain," who preach without devoting consecutive thought to the subject in hand, in hackneyed phrases, "and all of it emptied out like

a pail of odds and ends over the hapless heads of the hearers."

Mr. Alden, like Mr. Booth, condemns the blatant "charity," which, using the word in Mr. Booth's sense, always degrades both the giver and the recipient, although he remarks, "a different kind of charity *is* needed, and if the word is to be used, let us 'depolarize' it and make it once more to signify the spontaneous outflow of love in the heart of man for his fellow-creature."

The widespread suspicion of insincerity which in the popular mind attaches to the organised churches is again referred to.

"The masses," says Mudie Smith, "subconsciously believe that a large stipend is not in harmony with the teaching and example of Jesus Christ." The minister "must have a large heart, and, if he is to be believed in by the people, a small salary."

"People are weary," says Mr. Warren, "of the monotony of singing doggerel rhymes and saying perfunctory prayers. Most of all they feel unmoved by the travesty of the Gospel perpetually presented in some quarters."

It is the old story, conviction and all that testifies to its depth and its reality, is the thing that tells.

But the most striking section of the report is that written on behalf of South London by C. F. G. Masterman.

He agrees in large measure with what I have already quoted, and in regard to public worship acknowledges that there is a search for something more "warm, human and inspiring."

He recognises on the one hand the indifference against which organised Christian effort seems to beat in vain ; “ the masses ” (I quote his words) “ to whom the spiritual world has no meaning, and from whose lives the very fundamental bedrock effects of religion seem to have vanished.”

On the other hand, with Charles Booth and the other writers he recognises the failure of the churches, “ whose faith,” he says, “ has grown cold and whose good news sounds far removed from anything approaching the passionate enthusiasm of other Christian centuries.”

He epitomises the situation as he sees it in a miniature portrait of suburban life, which I will give you as he paints it.

Speaking of suburban religion, he says :—

“ Much of it is the mere conventional homage to the accepted gods of the community. And even the section that is honest and deliberate is often partly lacking in certain essentials of an active and aggressive Christian endeavour. It upholds a decent life and a clean moral standard, with much individual personal piety. But it is far too content to limit its outlook to its own family or church, heedless of the great chaos of confusion and failure which lies at its very doors. It regards with disapproval and often with contempt, this world of poverty with its dumb demand for aid ; it is generous in charity, but no appeal for justice in the name of the forgotten poor goes forth with united voice from the churches of South London. It is content to cultivate its own garden, to save its own soul ; it is loth to identify its interests with those of its less successful neighbours. The challenge “ Which think ye was neighbour to him that fell among thieves ? ” remains unaccepted. For this neglect of obvious Christian duty its loss is at least

as great as the loss of those it declines to aid. It becomes more and more cut off from the great realities to which a real religion has always appealed. It draws a line tight round its own border, and endeavours to satisfy with missions and gifts of money the obligation of personal service and of a campaign for justice to all the desolate and oppressed. It has remained up till now unaffected by destructive criticism, and the changes of thought and outlook which have so ravaged the orthodox religions in other regions. But there are not wanting signs of the approach of the disturbance; it has still to pass through a time of trial in which it will be tested to its foundations. Materialism, the lust for pleasure, the modern impatience with a definite creed, are slowly creeping in to this vigorous suburban area; and the negative assertions of science and Biblical criticism are creating centres of local disquietude. If the prevailing type of religion largely withers before such forces as these, it will be because it has set itself apart in comfort, content with a personal creed of salvation; because it has felt no passionate impulse to assert a common fellowship with the less fortunate who are lying at its doors—no call to right the wrongs which, in the words of a great modern reformer, ‘cry continually into the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth.’”

Turning to specific remedies, Mr. Masterman, like the rest, criticizes the form and method of the services. I will not, however, detain you with the details but will content myself with a quotation expressing his view of the average sermon:—

“I would not reiterate the demand for ‘good preaching,’ which seems to me utterly to confuse the purposes of the services of the Church. We meet, not for edification, but for worship,—to confess our sins, to obtain spiritual succour, to renew the visible guarantee of fellowship. Eloquence will instruct everywhere, in the pulpit as in the marketplace. But the crowds that run after a popular preacher,



that purchase his portraits and finger his clothes and pry into his family life and the contents of his larder, seem to me somewhat alien from the sincerest forms of religion. Yet there is no doubt we laymen have a right to appeal for better preaching ; that the pulpit in many cases is not only not an attractive, but is actually a repellent, force. We have no right to demand eloquence, but we may demand sincerity, the frank facing of difficulty, freedom from the conventional machinery of the popular exposition of doctrine. The prevailing theology, even more perhaps than the prevailing liturgy, is wrapped up in an ancient language. The very terms are technical—grace, justification, conversion, perseverance. They flow out glibly from the student who has soaked himself in their historical meanings ; they are Greek to the general. They were once living realities for which men fought and gladly died ; they still symbolize realities, the permanent elements of the life history of the soul ; but they are wrapped around in cobwebs and the complications of a technical system,” and he concludes by appealing for “ some message concerning the things of the spirit, delivered in simplicity and humility and sincerity to men who fain would be simple, humble and sincere.”

This quotation brings me to the point which Mr. Masterman has rightly emphasised, and with a concluding extract, will leave me free to develop my argument.

“ The worship of machinery,” says Masterman, “ as Matthew Arnold continually asserted, is a national characteristic of Englishmen.” Summing up what we have been discussing, he says :—

“ Each observer appears to hold that if that particular section of the machine in which he can detect a flaw could be repaired, or if a particularly up-to-date invention replaced some antiquated adjustment, the machinery of the Churches would once again grind out religious enthusiasm,



With one it is the edifice ; he deplores the cold Gothic building, repellent to the poor ; he would substitute large lighted halls of the remarkable and dignified style characteristic of the later nineteenth century, with plenty of carpets, paint, and colour. With another it is the edifices themselves ; let the leaders of religion come into the street, he holds, and the problem is solved. With one again it is the service, antiquated, unintelligible to the vulgar ; collect a band, he urges, sing the ' Holy City ' and other moving modern melodies, weave into your prayers allusions to politics and incidents of the day. With another it is the sermon ; the minister is too cold, or speaks with stammering tongue. Let us place a great preacher in every pulpit, and the masses will vehemently fight for entrance to our churches. Some advocate, some deprecate, the methods of the theatre ; some would abolish pews altogether, and let the men stand ; some see the inevitable advance of religion if pews are made more comfortable. Each one has convinced opinions as to what ' the poor ' will come to—the large hall, the small mission, the street corner. Few seem to care to face the question what we have to offer ' the poor ' when they come."

I think that our examination of the two publications which have been under review will support my statement that the question " What is worship ? " is not untimely. If we examine the facts we see that there is an actual decline in the attendance at public worship. If we compare the recent religious census in London with the census undertaken by the *British Weekly* in 1886 we find that while the population of London proper has increased by half a million in the last seventeen years, there has been a decrease of 150,000 in the attendances, the Church of England having fallen from 535,000 to 396,000, and the Non-conformists from 369,000 to 363,000. The quotations

from the writers I have selected—all of them by investigation or actual service acquainted with the inner life of the metropolis and qualified to speak with authority,—point to the fact that the problem of public worship is recognised as unsolved. Ideas relating thereto are fluid, not fixed. There is a sense of impending change, of need and of baffled endeavour. A single fact will throw into vivid light the measure of indifference which it is sought to overcome. On one Sunday in London 122,000 persons out of a population of 142,000 visited public-houses, and only 31,331 attended public worship. Even so great an effort as the United Free Church Mission of 1900 and 1901 practically failed to reach the outside world, and, like a stone cast into a stagnant pool, has left scarcely a ripple behind it. We may be prepared to admit that bright halls, chairs instead of pews, with other such details, have their place, and even an important place, in the solution of the problem. The need for a warmer social atmosphere in our religious fellowship, for less formality and more sincerity of feeling and expression, is self-evident. One reads it in every line of the census reports, and in the last addresses of this series I shall have more to say upon the social side of Christian responsibility.

But behind all these questions, legitimate as they are, and not to be neglected as mere practical details (for they may be the outward expression of a new and healthier spirit in our religious life), stands the great and fundamental question of the *message*. As compared with spiritual temper and outlook, adjustments and machinery count as nothing. This question

of the message is the subject of these addresses, and we shall find ourselves face to face with it, when by way of preface we ask the personal question, "What is worship—what does worship mean to us?"

The man who contracts the week-end habit and goes down to a house-party in the country in his motor-car to play bridge, or the man who goes to the nearest waste land or common on Sunday morning to do a bit of rabbit coursing, if he is not simply in revolt against a stupid and narrow conception of the Sabbath, is laying bare the emptiness of his soul, and, with a light-headed irresponsibility, playing pitch and toss with the immortal issues of life. Worship clearly has no meaning for him.

But what meaning has it to the man who on Sundays takes pains over his toilet, and, wearing the spotless credentials of respectability, repairs to church, chapel or meeting-house? Too often, alas, the performance is no more than a convention. And how oppressive the conventional formality of worship can be is soon discerned as we turn over the pages of any volume of ordinary sermons. The language is remote, the expression stilted and according to a set pattern which is regarded as "correct." Sir Edward Fry, in an essay on sermons, remarks, "the ordinary preacher is afraid to call a spade a spade; he would rather describe it as 'that instrument of agriculture with which our first father laboured when, by the providence of God, he was called on to till the garden of Eden.'"

This indirectness, this evasion of straight issues, affects, alas, the whole atmosphere of devotion. The cry "mea culpa" seldom disturbs the smug com-

placency of the slumbering congregation. The silk hat is newly ironed, the best dress worn, and Sunday dinner, with coffee and forty winks on a Chesterfield before a nice crackling fire, swim vaguely before the mental vision, and touch the proceedings with the mild pleasures of comfortable anticipation.

“ I’m willing a man should go tollable strong  
Agin wrong in the abstract, for thet kind o’ wrong  
Is ollers unpop’lar and never gits pitied,  
Because it’s a crime no one ever committed,  
But he must not be hard on particler sins,  
’Cos, then he’ll be kickin’ the people’s own shins.”

And of course the people’s own shins must never be kicked.

Even where this description is scarcely just, the sermon is too often a lecture, and illustrates in its want of spiritual inspiration, no less than its elaborate and exclusive appeal to the intellect, the detachment of preacher and hearer from the true idea of worship. A minister north of the Tweed, who prepared his sermons with all the ponderous patience of a German and with all the theological disputatiousness of a Scot, once lost the manuscript on which a week’s labour and much midnight oil had been spent. Feverish search, till the last tolling of the summoning bell, proved unavailing. He had to face his congregation without it, and having explained the disaster, he concluded :—

“ This morning, brethren, I must speak even as the Lord gives me utterance, but to-night, brethren, I hope to come better prepared.”



I am afraid I cannot vouch that the story is true, but in its implication it reflects, only too faithfully, a common attitude of mind. It is not under such conditions that the inwardness of worship is known. Where the simple freedom and the warmth of the family spirit are absent there will be nothing indeed of the wonderful spiritual intimacy of a Mme. Guyon and formalism will creep in apace. The want of homeliness in public worship is indeed a serious loss, for the conscious rectitude of fixed conventional worship has in it something of the properties of an iceberg, chilling the spiritual atmosphere, and clouding the deeper issues of life in its self-created fog.

But formal worship is already smitten with the doom of unreality. In these days men will not tolerate make-believe. No shibboleth will satisfy them, the interpretation of worship must be profound if it is to have lasting power. Hymns and sermons are a necessary element in social worship, but neither singing hymns nor listening to sermons will save men "out of their distresses, bring them out of the shadow of death, or break the gates of brass and cut the bars of iron in sunder." The need is too deep for external palliatives. For a time, it is true, religion has been unfashionable, and there has been a notable tendency to look upon spiritual matters with indifference, to scoff at theology and philosophy, and to put an exclusive emphasis upon *practical* work. We have heard in this generation a great deal about environment. The slums with their tainted atmosphere, dingy courts and bad drains, the dull, unlovely streets, the drear monotony of smoke-grimed walls—and so



forth. We have heard less than we did of the inward struggle between the soul and the spiritual paralysis of sin, the tragic witness of the Cross, the passion of the Divine redemption. No doubt the reason is simple. We have been witnessing a reaction from the other worldliness of a religious profession which took too little count of the terrible evils of social life. What was once a matter of course is now intolerable. An enlightened sympathy has quickened the social conscience, and thought awakened by necessity has concentrated upon practical reforms. Garden cities, allotments, model cottages, the science of sanitation, physical culture, these are subjects of general interest and conversation. Nor can we complain of this development. It has not indeed gone far enough. The social condition of England is such that a hundred years hence men will look back upon it with wondering pity. Nay ! where organised Christianity continues indifferent or blind to the curse of poverty and the starved, unwholesome life to which thirty per cent. of our population is condemned, it is unfaithful to Jesus Christ and working in defiance of his spirit.

With this view every one here is doubtless agreed. It is conceded that if earth is to blossom into heaven we must have healthy conditions of life, shorter hours of labour, a more equable distribution of wealth, the abolition of social disabilities. But external environment, important in its moral as in its physical consequences, is not the whole environment of man. There is an environment of the soul, an unseen but real influence, bearing upon character more intimately than do good or bad drains, and ill or well ventilated

houses. In the swing of the reaction from an unreal religion, this less tangible environment has been neglected. Many have felt that reaction and have shared in measure the prevailing doubt as to the efficacy of direct spiritual communion.

But even in a Garden City death enters, and selfishness ; sin and pain are known. God forbid that we should slacken for a day in social effort, but we are coming back to the deeper things of life. The mystery of being, the whence and the whither of man, the awful reaches of eternity, the unmeasured solitudes of space, the silent majesty of universal law, irrevocable cause and effect, the iron machinery of fate, the unequal distribution of pain, the sense of sin, the sickening despair of failure, the certainty of death, the apparent silence of God. Here is the stuff of theology and philosophy. Despised ? Yes, for a time, but never for long. Unpractical ? No, because the ground of all enduring work must be faith in the love of God.

This generation has rediscovered a truth which ought never to have been obscured—the truth that spiritual realities underlie the outward facts of life. The ordinary man is pondering it already. Sir Oliver Lodge, in the pages of the *Hibbert Journal*, tells us how the cultured layman is feeling his way, and Mr. Blatchford, under the pressure of this movement, re-hashes in the *Clarion* the rationalism of forty years ago.

Both are symptoms. While the Church Congress discusses the emptiness of the pews and Mr. Cadbury counts the minority of Londoners who publicly worship God, and Mr. Booth in several volumes marks the failure of the Churches, men are digging down again

to the foundations of religion. They are burdened once more by that age-long need of the heart, the "Weltschmerz" of Goethe, the craving, the longing to know God, His character, His purpose, and His love.

What is worship ? It is not a form but an exercise. The worshippers by proxy, who leave spiritual exercise to the minister and praise to the choir, have been named by Professor Drummond the "helpless, pampered parasites of the pew." Their beliefs are borrowed contentedly at second-hand, not won by the sweat of the brow. They know nothing of what Mr. Gladstone has called the *work* of worship their soul has never fainted in them, they have never cried unto Jehovah in their trouble. The abandonment of the senses to æsthetic charm, the surrender of the intellect to claims veiled in all the glamour of a great historic past, the yielding up of individual responsibility to the authority of a priest, are sore temptations which assail the weakness of the flesh.

Under every form and in every denomination there is true worship, but its truth is inward and intimate in the secret of the soul. The willing abasement of creaturely pride, the concentration of the whole energies of mind and heart upon the highest ends of life, upon purity of thought and motive, upon self-forgetting love, upon Him who in Himself personified for us the Holiest instincts of Humanity—this is worship—the mingling of prayer and praise, of strife and victory, the hunger and thirst of those who wander in the wilderness, in a desert way, who have found no city of habitation, the praise of men who can thank

Jehovah for His loving-kindness, for His wonderful works to the children of men, who have passed in His strength from victory to victory, from the regions of doubt into the sunshine of knowledge, from the loneliness of spiritual isolation to the joy of conscious union with the unseen Spirit of the universe.

In all the clamour of our modern life, with its feverish pleasures and hasty judgments, its fierce scramble of the markets, its dull *ennui* of endowed selfishness, its social aloofness and insincerities, nay ! its lust and its cruelties, is there to be no place for the quiet and peace of God ?

Stand apart at times from outward observance and the spoken word, and in the spirit of inward worship weigh your life, observe its trend, realise its purpose. Give your soul room to grow. Seek the reality which others have won before you and make it your own. The silence of the Quaker meeting means only this. It is no foolish freak of seventeenth century fanaticism, but a necessity of the soul's true life. It is not, it ought not to be, the perquisite of any one denomination. The soul must know itself and the battle of life must be fought within.

“ For as the eye sinks inwards

A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast,

And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again

. . . and the heart lies plain,

And what we mean we say and what we would we know,

A man becomes aware of his life's flow,

And hears its widening murmur . . .

And then he thinks he knows

The hills where his life rose,

And the sea where it goes.”



Character will be deepened and enriched, and all work, faith and life will be the stronger for such inward consciousness of God.

In the stately ceremonial of cathedral worship, in the simple service of a village tabernacle, there is room for the silent pause, for the earnest offering of individual and personal prayer. Formalism can only be dispelled as men recognise in public worship an expressed belief in the eternal values of life, and in its continuance beyond the limits of this physical existence. And reality will only return as, bound by the spirit of true fellowship, they unite in a common social endeavour (the supremest of which the soul is capable) to realise a sensible contact between the flesh-imprisoned spirit and the enveloping presence of Eternal Love.

“ Dear Lord and Father of mankind,  
    Forgive our foolish ways !  
    Reclothe us in our rightful mind,  
    In purer lives Thy service find,  
    In deeper reverence, praise.

“ In simple trust like theirs who heard  
    Beside the Syrian sea  
    The gracious calling of the Lord,  
    Let us, like them, without a word,  
    Rise up and follow thee.

“ O Sabbath rest by Galilee !  
    O calm of hills above,  
    Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee  
    The silence of eternity,  
    Interpreted by love !



- “ With that deep hush subduing all  
Our words and works, that drown  
The tender whisper of Thy call,  
As noiseless let Thy blessing fall  
As fell Thy manna down.
- “ Drop Thy still dews of quietness,  
Till all our strivings cease ;  
Take from our souls the strain and stress,  
And let our ordered lives confess  
The beauty of Thy peace.
- “ Breathe through the heats of our desire  
Thy coolness and Thy balm ;  
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire ;  
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,  
O still, small voice of calm ! ”\*

## II.

### MAY WE BELIEVE IN GOD ?

*Scripture portion*—Psalm vii. or John xv. 1-11.

THOSE who have been fortunate enough to escape from the town into the country during these beautiful days of the waning year, have found nature in a kindly mood. Autumn, spirit though she be of gentle melancholy, has kept her court in regal fashion, decorating the woods with glowing colour, touching the leaves with “fiery finger tips” to scarlet and gold, and diffusing the slant rays of the setting sun through a delicate veil of mist upon the moorland heights, till they seemed as the glory of a haloed saint. Often it has been possible in the loneliness of the hills, with the fragrance of the damp woods in our nostrils, and in the clinging silence of nature, to feel with Wordsworth :—

“ that serene and blessed mood,  
In which the affections gently lead us on,—  
Until the breath of this corporeal frame  
And even the motion of our human blood  
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
In body, and become a living soul ;  
While with an eye made quiet by the power  
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things,”

and with the poet learn to evade

. . . “ the fretful stir  
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world.”

As the light fades in the evening sky, outward and inner vision are enticed from distance to distance of faint colour, up from "the russet lawns and fallows grey" into the illimitable void of space. Now twilight has in her "sober livery all things clad." The ecstasy of colour is past. Gathering gloom blots out the familiar details, the church tower seen through the trees, the farm nestling under the distant hill, the glint of water in the stream, the far roadway, all the marks of human fellowship, the home surroundings of the earthly life, fade in the blackness of night, and the sky is stretched above us, a great dome pierced with a thousand twinkling points of light. Man and all his business of courts and parliaments, markets and finance, his pains and pleasures, shrinks into infinitely little compass. The mind ranges free along pathless ways among the stars.

And yet in this joy of colour, this mood so exalted, so aloof, this severance of human ties, is it all peace?

There is so much beauty in a starlit sky; the moon, subject of endless verse,

"Oft, as if her head she bowed,  
Stooping through a fleecy cloud,"

the planets with their steady beam, the glittering dust of the milky way,—that we might well forget everything save the pageant spread before us—did not other thoughts intrude. The emptiness of intervening space, the dizzy gulf that separates star from star, the unthinkable, interminable, appalling vastness of a universe without a limit. The terror of the giant forces let loose in the flaming gases of those wheeling

suns, their fierce unswerving onrush, second after second, year after year, century after century, millennium after millenium ; the mystery of the dead worlds, heaven's spent fireworks, hung barren and frozen to swing monotonously through their inexorable circles.

As the solemn realities of eternity, the impotence of human power, the poverty of human knowledge, are unfolded to our searching quest, the peace of the starlit sky is broken. We hear the clang and roar of the machinery of the universe ; a wind from desert places, cold and inhospitable, shrivels the soul. We feel suddenly the unutterable sense of loneliness which, in hours of self-realisation, gathers round the faltering faith of man. What is he that thou art mindful of him ? And the son of man that thou visitest him ?

Is it true that thou crownest him with glory and honour ? thou who hast set thy glory upon the heavens, the work of thy fingers ?

And is there behind this pageant, in the earthquake wind and fire, is there, can there be one who cares, one to whom I can pray, one I may call my Father ?

That is the question we have before us to-night, the question involved in the title "May we believe in God ?"—the question which the unflinching self-examination of the soul, earnestly intent upon the realities of worship, must put and answer.

Last Sunday we discussed two questions :—Why men neglect social worship ? and what social worship really is ? We noted the frequent formalism of

public worship, the widespread indifference to spiritual life, the evidence of neglect as shown in the statistics of attendance, the growing concern of the churches, their varied efforts to attract, the increasing fluidity of the forms of worship, the evident need for a simpler type of church fellowship and of congregational worship, which shall give greater place to social needs and secure greater freedom and range of individual expression in the exercise of worship, and finally we defined worship as the recognition of a life outside ourselves, as a labour of the spirit, a concentration of mind and heart upon the supreme end, the establishing of a living contact between the individual soul and the spiritual force or forces of the Universe. Worship must be something more than the conventional homage paid to an idol personifying our national pride, self-righteousness and self-esteem ; an idol which is made to throw its protection over law and order under the mask of religion, and to recognise as inviolable under that name all rights of property and dignities of rank and place, while slow to recognise social justice or to cherish humility, mercy and peace.

It is only in the inwardness of true spiritual worship that the soul grows aware of its deepest need, becomes impatient of self-deception and of the world's poor baubles, and seeks with passionate longing to know the real basis and meaning of life.

Here in the crowded congregation, as alone in the temple of nature, man is driven to face the naked facts of experience, and to ask the question already stated, "Is there a God whom I may worship, and if there be, how may I find him ?"



“Canst thou by searching find out God ? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection ?” So enquired Zophar the Naamathite of Job, and such is the interrogation of the modern mind, baffled and confused in the conflict of life, and by the ever growing problems of existence.

How shall we set about to answer ? Few of us probably are trained in philosophical thinking, the technical language of abstract thought is difficult to us, for the average Englishman is practical rather than speculative. A learned logical argument is probably beyond our reach, certainly beyond mine, and in any case could not possibly be conducted to a satisfactory issue in one hour. Must we then abandon the search ? I think not. There is fortunately a path of approach wherein the wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot err. The way to God lies not solely nor even primarily through intellectual processes of reasoning, but through the heart. There are in short two modes of attack, the intellectual and the spiritual. And while I do not say that intellectual processes have no place or validity, I believe the second alternative is at once the most hopeful and helpful for this or for any company of men.

I believe this to be inevitable, because we are compelled by the conditions of our nature, to think of God in the terms of human relationship. We can talk as we like of the “absolute,” and the “infinite.” These terms are convenient and stand for certain philosophical ideas. But at best they are terms used to express supposed realities, which the human mind cannot possibly grasp or comprehend. They are as

counters in the game of logic, the letter X in our algebraic equation, they cannot be palpitating realities to us as men. It is a great fallacy to suppose that you can argue a man into the knowledge of God ; supply him, that is, with intellectual proofs of his existence and character, altogether apart from the question of spiritual state or receptivity. That there are mental difficulties, difficulties of the reason, which check or bar spiritual progress is, of course, sadly true. These have to be removed if peace is to be won, and intellectual arguments may and do have a persuasive or suggestive influence. Only I do not see that by themselves they can be exhaustive or complete. A dear friend of mine, a professor of philosophy, has just published a book which he has called "Social Law in the Spiritual World," and which he sent me during the preparation of this address. In establishing the lines of his argument he takes much the same position and rejects one after another the stock arguments for the proofs by logic. I shall sin in good company if I follow his example.

Take the causality argument. By itself it leads nowhere. It proceeds in this fashion. Here is some object, let us say Burns' "wee, modest crimson-tippit flower." It must have had a cause. You press the enquiry back and back, effect, cause, effect, cause, effect, cause—but where do you stop ? At God ! Then who caused God ? No ! There is no finality—no helpful issue here. It contains a truth, but not the final truth.

Take the argument from design. Now I am quoting the philosopher :—

"The argument from design to a *personal* God does not convince anyone who is not *already* convinced."

"The most that can be *proved* from design," he adds, "is the fact that a man is a being who finds designs and ends and purpose everywhere in his world."

In other words, although the argument from design contains a great and suggestive truth, by itself it is not adequate for our purpose. Let us attempt a brief excursion into this field of argument and see how much we can gather from it. You know the famous watch theory; an intelligent savage picks up a watch upon the beach. It is evident to him that it is the work of an inventive and constructive mind, a higher intelligence (whom he will probably worship as a god), and this view is strengthened by the discovery that the little wheels one within the other co-operate to measure time, have in short a definite end which they serve. The facts of nature, we say, are like this watch and lead us to make the inference of a controlling mind. But here science interposes difficulties. She develops the theory of the struggle for the survival of the fittest. There is constant adaptation to changing conditions and necessities.

The ends served by nature, says science, are not ultimate, visible, definite and fixed, like the ends served by the watch. Moreover they are those of the creatures that seek them, not those of God. Darwin saw conditions develop necessities, necessities develop ends, and ends develop the power to seek them, and he could not see that in this there was any need of creative

invention or of creative purpose. A man falls lame through an accident, and cuts a walking stick with his knife to help himself along, but the stick is the design of the man, not of God. Such difficulties, though often pressed and sometimes confusing, do not in reality touch the central truth. The power and freedom of adaptation remains, and is no argument against an ultimate purpose, an original initiative, a working and controlling mind. As a matter of fact man *does* find *coherence* in the universe. He is able to classify the forces and facts, to rely upon their certain action and character under recognised conditions and in recognised modes.

Whether the universe has existed always or whether it has been created in six days, whether it is real or a subjective illusion, we do not escape the necessity for a cause, and since the universe, whether it be an illusion or not, is intelligible to the individual and to the corporate human consciousness, since the structure and action of our minds correspond to the structure and method of things around us, it is neither absurd nor illogical for us to argue from the facts, to a mind outside our own.

But where does all this lead us? Such argument may be of service in meeting the stupid dogmatism of those who assert, in the fulness of their omniscience, that there is no first cause, no creative mind, no God. It is certainly useful in assisting to clear away the mental barriers which obstruct the earnest soul in his search after the ultimate cause, but it fails hopelessly to realise for the seeker that which he most longs to know, the character and purpose of the ultimate cause



in its personal relation to himself. To quote my friend again, "the God and Father of Jesus Christ is the God whom we, in our modern quest, want to know, and not another."

That I believe whether we are all willing to confess it or not is the truth. It is God, as we see Him in Christ, who satisfies the longings of the human heart, God the loving Father, whose passionate tender care for the least and most insignificant makes the burden of life supportable—brings faith and hope to man.

Let us then abandon the intellectual argument, that is to say the argument *in vacuo*, and endeavour to follow out what we may call the spiritual line of approach, keeping close to the facts of experience and of history as we do so. A certain view of God has come to us through Jesus of Nazareth. Let us take this view as our assumption or hypothesis and test it. We shall only be adopting the methods of science if we do so. Given a fact the scientist frames his interpreting hypothesis, and sets to work to subject it to the test of an experiment. He makes indeed an experimental venture of faith. That is a sound method. Neither in science nor religion can we arrive at truth unless we experiment. In both, the construction of unverified theories is a barren task. The man who asserts that he will believe only what he understands, forgetting the wholesome teaching of the old adage, "Nothing venture, nothing win," is in great danger of turning into an intellectual fossil.

We must at the outset arm ourselves with a definition. The word "God" is used in so many different senses that we must be particular in this.



We are not concerned for instance in the national God, who fights the battles of England or Germany or Russia, as if he were the chieftain of a tribe ; we are concerned with the God of Jesus, who is yet very imperfectly known and understood in Christian Europe.

And the matter is important because our idea of God means really our idea of life. You cannot separate them. The two are inevitably and organically related. You hate or despise the foreigner. You make a proud boast of your national strength. You straddle across the seas and dare others to compete with you, and at once the Universal Father shrinks to the God of England, or the conception becomes so pagan that he is spoken of as the God of Battles, and all the grace of Christian humility and all the moral grandeur of Christian meekness are swallowed up in the vapourings of an ignoble pride.

Belief in God and the character and terms of our belief are of practical, individual, nay, of international importance. We set out therefore with the Christian definition of God ; a definition drawn from the material of the Gospels ; I give it you as stated by Professor Clarke in his "Outlines of Christian Theology."

*"God is the Personal Spirit, perfectly good, who in holy love, creates, sustains and orders all."*

Can we test that ?

To begin with, if God is as thus described, perfectly good, the Creator of all, how comes it that so many doubt His existence ? Would not His reality be self-evident, all pervading, all controlling ? Yes, it would if man's spiritual consciousness were developed

to the necessary degree of spiritual sensitiveness. But man sees very dimly. Mr. Blatchford, for example, is cocksure that there is no God, and demolishes him in two hundred pages of journalese. With Job, we can only answer him, "No doubt ye are the people and wisdom shall die with you," though we shall be inclined to extend the quotation and add in the words of the patriarch, "But I have understanding as well as you!" The fact is that the conception of a good God is too far-reaching for our immediate comprehension. To quote Professor Clarke:—"The reality of such a being can be firmly established only by concurrent reasons coming from various realms of existence and approved by various powers of the human spirit." Proof by intellectual argument is one thing—the growing knowledge of active experience is another.

Introduce a primitive savage to Lord Kelvin. How long would it be before they conversed upon equal terms? To the savage Lord Kelvin would simply be a physical animal of the same species, inferior probably in brawn and muscle to himself. His powers of intellect would be simply non-existent so far as the savage was concerned. Perhaps Lord Kelvin might perform a chemical experiment before him, give him, so to speak, a sign from heaven with an explosion and a flash, something like Mount Pelée on a small scale, and then the savage would probably beat the ground with his forehead and grovel, not because he understood, but in fear and dread of that which he did *not* understand. Assuming for the moment that the savage was capable of such tuition

in the space of a lifetime, he would need to be taught step by step what Lord Kelvin knew, to have Lord Kelvin interpreted for him, so to speak, and then he would see, not merely a physical being like himself, but a commanding intellect. Nay, more than that, he would find that in understanding Lord Kelvin he himself had ceased to be the mere cunning brute of the wilderness, and the whole of life would have a different aspect. Instead of the fish in the river and the nuts on the tree and the sheltering cave at night, his mental horizon would embrace civilisation. Literature, art, science, culture, the subtle relationship of intellectual and refined society, all these would have swept in upon his consciousness. It was all there before, but the savage did not know. He could not see. He had to learn.

So it is with man and God. Man needs to learn. God needs to be interpreted. To see Him and know Him we must grow into His image.

Or let me put it in another way. In his book, already quoted, "Social Law in the Spiritual World," Professor Rufus Jones says :—

"The revelation of God is like the revelation of music. Music is revealed, can be revealed, only through a musician. It comes to be reality, to be influencing power, a subduing and controlling force, only as an appreciative mind seizes and expresses the meaning and value of harmony. To the musician himself the world of harmony which he blindly felt at first as he laboriously toiled to master his instrument has now become a reality not a whit less real than are the scenery and circumstance of his life of sense."

And having quoted this passage, I find Professor

Jones so much in accordance with what I desire to say, that I shall quote him again :

“ If,” he says, “ our search for God is to have a happy issue we must *first* resist the tendency to narrow knowledge. We must rather insist on raising it to the highest terms. We must include under the *knowledge process* our entire capacity for dealing with reality. Secondly we must look for God where He *could be* found—not in the wide stellar spaces, not ‘ in eagle’s wing or insect’s eye,’ not at the end of a logical syllogism. If He is to be found at all we must look for Him in the spiritual realm. We must go at once where spirit manifests itself. All attempts to find God apart from and dis severed from personal life have failed, and of course always will fail. He is surely not less personal than we are ; He will at least be as genuinely spiritual as we mortals are ! ”

Here is a clear lead as to the method we are to adopt in testing our definition.

The scientific man, working with laborious patience in his proper sphere, has an aversion for what he calls “ subjectivity.” The inward spiritual facts of life are no facts to him. You cannot put them in a crucible or examine them under a lens. Direct the telescope to Saturn and you see his rings, direct the microscope upon a leaf and you see its cells. But the astronomer turning from his telescope, exclaims, “ I have swept the heavens and find no God ! ” What shall we think of the man who after adjusting and focussing his microscope, rises with the exclamation, “ I have examined the brain and find no trace of love.”

We should be reminded I think of Lord Kelvin and the savage. What is it we value most in life ?



Is it things as they are in the outward? Is it the bare objects of sense? that which we can weigh, measure, dissect? In the landscape is it not its indefinable aspect of beauty? in the human being is it not the subtle charm of character, the winsomeness of unselfish love, the radiant joy of a pure heart? If we think of it, outward facts are of moment to us only as the vehicles of an inward reality, and without that inward reality, to adopt Professor Jones' vigorous language, "a man would be as interesting as a sand dune, as unspiritual as an extinct volcano on the moon."

The answer to the scientist is this:—Judging by the sure test of cumulative experience, the facts of the spiritual life are as real and of deeper importance than the facts of the physical world. But these facts are personal.

Very well then, I shall be frankly "anthropomorphic," and that terrible anathema which the agnostic pronounces upon the orthodox with all the unction of an "abracadabra" shall for once be disregarded.

Our definition says, "God is *the* Personal Spirit," and as I study the history of Christian experience—the test of the definition—I find it *is* this personal aspect of God which has uplifted and sustained men in the stress of suffering and persecution, and given them peace and joy in the bitterness of bereavement or in the article of death. Science dwells on the vastness of God—the endless reaches of space, the majesty of law. This is an aspect of the supreme power, but not that aspect towards which we turn as



children seeking help. We cannot follow Him through space, we are lost in the desolate void. No doubt to the pantheist who asserts the abstract essence as over against the personality, this thought appeals, but whatever be the truth of Pantheism,—and it doubtless expresses a truth,—we are bound to say if we accept the Christian revelation, that God may be more than we can mean by personal, but he is not less. The thought of God's vastness crushes, whereas we need a conception of him which shall give us confidence and courage. The evidence of experience is final, that help comes through another channel, by the way of a personal interpretation.

“ God is the Personal Spirit, perfectly good, who in holy love creates, sustains and orders all.” On whose witness do we say that ? On the witness of Jesus Christ.

If we resist the tendency to narrow knowledge and insist on raising it to the highest terms, what are the highest terms in the range of human experience ?

Again it is the witness of Jesus Christ. Now let us keep close to experience ; what as an historical fact, *is* that witness ? First of all, if we are to interpret the gospels and the history of the church we are bound to say again that it is the witness of personality. The Gospel is the story of an incarnation, the Gospel is the assertion that in Jesus “ God and man came together in a single individual life ”—in short the Gospel *is* Jesus Christ.

I am not making a theological assertion of my own. I am not even confining myself to the evidence of the New Testament. I am trying to discover the

spiritual and social dynamic of twenty centuries—and I find it not only in the teaching and death, in the life and the message, but in the *person* of Jesus.

History points to him as the supreme interpreter of the divine music—of that “deep power of harmony” in which “we see into the life of things”—the interpreter of God.

Let me put it as it has come to me and to many more. As our human minds are constituted there can in the nature of the case be no revelation of God except in human terms, terms we can understand with human faculties. A God who is unrelated to man by human ties is a God who must remain for ever unknowable and remote. Very well then. Read in the history of the human race the story of man groping after God. Here and there he catches a gleam of the heavenly radiance, hears the “rustling of garments of the Lord.” In Egypt, India, China, Persia, Greece, men have gathered something of eternal truth. We find it scattered in their literature, their old books tell us what they saw. But the vision was imperfect. Truth flickered, flaming high in Socrates and Plato, sinking low in the Egyptian Priest. Hope and knowledge were uncertain. Pessimism lurked at the heart of the Hindoo philosophy, and Plato longed for a sure and certain raft—some Divine word upon which men might make perchance a safe harbour from life’s stormy sea.

Into the twilight of the world steps the pure child of God. He was the dawn. With Him came daylight. The sun shone above the hills. What had been dim was clear. “I and the Father are one.” The great

gulf between man and God is bridged. The heavens like brass are pierced. God has spoken in human language. He has made Himself known on His human side. He has interpreted His own character and will in a life lived under human conditions, and has brought Himself within our human comprehension. In nature there is mystery. The mystery of unequal suffering, of pain, sin, and the terror of death, of the cruel struggle for survival, the preying of the strong upon the weak, of "nature red in tooth and claw." But through the dark veil which hid God from man comes a crowned figure with this speech upon his lips: "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." To the slave of doubt and fear he gives his hand. Life has had no meaning, no adequate ideal or purpose. "Take up thy cross and follow me." Certain facts of nature have seemed to you to fight strongly against a belief in the love of God. "Come unto me and I will give you rest."

What is there inherently impossible in this movement of God towards man? Apart altogether from historical evidence, the gathering witness of experience, the continued and growing vitality of the Christian view of life, which have somehow or other to be accounted for, why may we not freely accept the claim of Christ to be the revealer of the Father and render him gladly the homage of intellect and heart?

We are assuming the truth of the Christian view of God, God a loving, holy, personal spirit. But what does that involve? We forget sometimes that love is the most intense and active principle in the whole range of spiritual experience. The most loving per-

sonality we know is always the strongest in self-sacrifice, the richest in sympathy, the tenderest in charity, the one who enters most deeply into the lives of others. He is never self-centred, he is always reaching out, seeking to serve. This is our human experience. If we say God is love, can His love be less or other than ours? People sometimes talk loosely of their belief in love as an abstraction, as if an indefinable atmosphere of passive, impersonal good nature could pervade all things. But love cannot be either passive or impersonal. Its nature demands that it be both active and personal. Deprived of these attributes love ceases to exist. Love must have volition, initiative, direction, and love must have an object outside itself. If God is love He must seek man, He must wish to help him. He must be the sum of all the attributes which are swallowed up in the meaning of love. If the structure and action of our minds correspond to the structure and method of things around us, if we find the universe, whether illusion or reality, coherent and intelligible, are we to draw an arbitrary line and say that there cannot be a personality outside our own with which we are able to correspond? Upon what principles of logic, what evidence of experience, do we defend such a view? What for example will you make of the existence from a remote past of the instinct of prayer?

Experience is against us. Men have accepted the saying, "I and the Father are one," not on the mere authority of the Gospels, but because it has borne the test of time and satisfied their craving. Jesus, pure, holy and selfless, in the agony of Gethsemane,



and on the cross, is the accepted witness to the suffering love of a personal Father, one who cares, who grieves over sin, and is wounded in His heart by every transgression. Men have felt the strong drawing of that passionate yearning which broke forth in the cry "Father forgive them for they know not what they do," and they have yielded their will to the higher and stronger will of one whom they have come to recognise as a saviour, finding in this surrender a peace that nothing could destroy. Remember this is not speculative theology, but a statement of experience, an experience, moreover, illustrated in the victory of countless souls over sin and death. We are but pseudo-scientific if we contemptuously brush aside such evidence as of no account in a serious analysis of the forces and realities of life.

I repeat that if the witness of Jesus means anything, it means that God is not unrelated and impersonal, but that He is in spiritual contact with men, intelligible like the universe to human consciousness, that His love is not intangible but real, and corresponds to human love ; that His character is like our character but pure and perfect, that He knows and understands us and that we can know and understand Him.

"By all that He requires of me," says Whittier, "I know what God Himself must be," and by the obligations of human love, by the witness of Jesus Christ, we may know and see the character of God upon His human side. In Jesus we hear the beating of the Father's heart, and touch the hidden spring of the Divine Passion.



This at least is the strongest and most hopeful faith in the world to-day. Whatever our own may be, we must recognise its wonderful attraction—its drawing power. Close the Gospels for ever, erase the name of Jesus from the literature and the memory of men, and a dark shadow falls upon the world. A view of God full of solace and comfort disappears, and we are left to brood helpless once more over the mysteries of space and time. The divine music dies, and we hear again the roar and clang of the machinery of the universe.

Is there not in this evidence, so imperfectly marshalled, an indication of the true line of advance? We may believe in God but it must be an affair of the heart. We must be willing to make the venture of faith, to learn the virtue of self-sacrifice, to take with Christ the form of a servant, and with him to live within self-imposed limits for the sake of doing good. Step by step as we approach Christ experimentally, see with his eyes of tender pity, feel with his heart the burden of the world, we shall be learning to know the Father.

For man such faith is an end worth striving after, for, in the language of Erskine, it will rescue him from the uncertainties of time, by giving him a secure standing place in the eternal purpose of God.

“O Lord and Master of us all !  
Whate’er our name or sign,  
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,  
We test our lives by Thine.

“Thou judgest us ; Thy purity  
Doth all our lusts condemn ;

The love that draws us nearer Thee  
Is hot with wrath to them.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ To Thee our full humanity,  
Its joys and pains, belong ;  
The wrong of man to man on Thee  
Inflicts a deeper wrong.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ We faintly hear, we dimly see,  
In differing phrase we pray ;  
But, dim or clear, we own in Thee  
The Light, the Truth, the Way !

“ The homage that we render Thee  
Is still our Father’s own ;  
Nor jealous claim nor rivalry  
Divides the Cross and Throne.

“ To do Thy will is more than praise,  
As words are less than deeds,  
And simple trust can find Thy ways  
We miss with chart of creeds.

“ No pride of self Thy service hath,  
No place for me and mine ;  
Our human strength is weakness, death  
Our life, apart from Thine.

“ Apart from Thee all gain is loss,  
All labour vainly done ;  
The solemn shadow of Thy Cross  
Is better than the sun.

“ Alone, O love ineffable !  
Thy saving name is given ;  
To turn aside from Thee is hell,  
To walk with Thee is heaven ! ”\*

\* Whittier. “ Our Master.”

### III.

## WHAT HAS JESUS TO SAY TO THE INDIVIDUAL?

*Scripture portion*—2 Cor. v. 14-21.

TWO weeks ago we discussed the question "May we believe in God?" In seeking an answer we took three points of view:—

1. The Intellectual.
2. The Scientific.
3. The Personal.

We rejected the first not because we despise the intellect, or belittle its place in religious life. That would be a crowning folly in these days of sloppy and superficial thought, when men mistake spiced rhetoric for spiritual fervours, and the garnished paganism of the doctrine of force for Christian Gospel. Deep, serious thinking is a most desirable discipline for this hasty, pleasure-loving age, and as a condition of true progress is alike indispensable whether we are engaged in the spiritual or the social aspects of the religious problem.

We rejected what we have labelled the intellectual method of finding God because by itself the intellectual method, that is the method of proceeding by the processes of pure reason and logical sequence is proved futile or inadequate in experience. A young American

who had been sent to a theological college wrote after six weeks' residence to his father that he guessed he had learnt all there was to know about God—what was he to do next? He is an effective caricature of a type which finds its philosophy of life cheap and ready made, of men who live not deeply but pleasantly so the wind but favour their sails, optimists in blinkers, whose motto is evasion, who shirk life's sterner facts, who never practise their spiritual sinews in the wrestling of faith, but draw down the blinds of a comfortable domesticity against the solemn realities of Eternal Truth.

For them doubtless anything is good enough, but the serious seeker cannot find God at the end of a chain of argument, because on the one hand, God is something more than a philosophical product, the "Ergo" of the logician, and on the other, because the wounds of the broken-hearted, stricken with life's deepest sorrow, in the desolation of bereavement or heavy under the burden of sin, can find no comfort in the crackle of scholastic parchment.

We rejected what we have labelled the scientific method of finding God, not because we have any fear of science, not because we deprecate its vigorous search after scientific truth, its methods or its conclusions, when confined to their proper sphere. That would be to make the cardinal error of separating God from His world and of refusing to find Him in Nature. If we believe that the revelation of God is coherent and continuous, we must believe that there are no gaps without God in the Universe. We must welcome every new fact, whether from the hands of

Darwin or Huxley, and whether or not it disturbs the comfort of those accustomed ideas of the cosmogony which too often we confound with faith.

But the "Nature" of Science is not and never can be the God of the human heart. Nor can science alone reveal Him to us. Nature as understood by science, and treated as the only revelation to the exclusion of the Christian conception of the Eternal Fatherhood, becomes, as Sabatier tells us in his "Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion," a "formidable screen erected between ourselves and God, destroying hope and quenching prayer."

Its enigmas are so terrible, its evidence of law so crushing, its fatalism so complete.

In this connection I quoted Professor Clarke :—  
"The reality of such a being," that is of a God to whom we can reach out in the need of our souls just as children reach out their little hands to their mother in the dark, "can be formally established only by concurrent reasons coming from various realms of existence and approved by various powers of the human spirit."

We do not indeed absolutely reject the intellectual and scientific when we turn to what I call the personal method of finding God, we reject them only as in themselves insufficient, and adopt the personal method, the method of the heart, because experience teaches that this is the method by which alone the others become valid.

I have described this method as *personal* because that description defines what are, in the nature of the case, the conditions of any real knowledge of Divine



Truth. We are personal, finite beings. Our powers of apprehension are personal and finite. If God cannot interpret Himself in human language, the language of the personal and the finite, then He must remain forever unrevealed and unknowable to man. He may be there, but the point of contact is missing. There may, for example, be civilization in Europe, but the savages in some undiscovered forest of South America who live for the chase and whose blow-pipes are the only symbol of their superiority over the brutes, can know nothing of it. The means of knowledge, the points of contact, are missing. They would need a visitor from Europe to teach them what the higher life of our civilization might mean, and would only begin to understand him when he stooped to their intelligence and spoke in their tongue. Even as music demands an interpreter before it can flood the soul with its divine harmony, so God demands an interpreter before the heart can recognise that which it forever seeks and craves to know and feel.

If the contemporary witness of men and women and the cumulative experience of twenty centuries is to count for evidence, it must be taken as an attested fact that we find the supreme personal contact with the invisible God in Jesus Christ. What is the significance of that contact ? In other words, if this be true, and its truth, remember, must be tested by experience rather than by argument, "*What has Jesus to say to the Individual ?*" If in him the veil is pierced, the terror of death taken away, the meaning and purpose of life revealed, if in him we may find the musician who plays on our heart-strings the melodies of God,

the great interpreter, what is the burden of that music? What *is* the interpretation?

Now in answering this question we must be careful to avoid as far as we can the use of theological terms. They are not satisfying. There has been far too much scholasticism in our treatment of the person and work of Christ. The cry "Back to Christ," though it means many things, means also, if not primarily, this,—that men have grown weary of seeking spiritual food in doctrinal formulæ. They have lost the human touch of Jesus. Theology has proceeded so often apart from the actual experience of the soul, it has so often confounded Roman Jurisprudence with spiritual law, and treated the subtle fabric of spiritual life as if it were capable of mathematical measurement, that it has lost sight of the terrible pressure of our need for human relationship with God.

Consider for a moment the significant cult of the Virgin. We may interest ourselves if we like with the mythological origins, and trace the worship of Mary to the adoration of the female principle in creation which under its various forms is to be found all over the world. But surely the practical meaning of this phenomenon is this,—that the tender warmth and human attractiveness of the personality and teaching of Jesus have been destroyed or hidden by the cold, harsh and repellent theological interpretation which has been forced upon them. The human craving for Divine Love, barred from Jesus, has sought refuge in the mother heart of the Virgin, has carried over to her that conception of God which Jesus really gave. Nay, I will go further and state my belief that

the fact of what we call "Unitarianism" may be attributed very largely to the same cause. Tender spirits more truly baptized than many who acknowledge the title of Christian in its accepted sense have been revolted by the "Jesus" of orthodoxy, and have been driven to find direct in God that thought of the Eternal Fatherhood to which Jesus in his life of perfect filial obedience first gave vitality and power.

To my mind both these positions have their peculiar dangers. The worship of the Virgin resting as it does on no adequate historical basis, and in itself an unconscious compromise with truth, is liable to superstition, and the Unitarian view, so essentially Christian in spirit and often so beautiful in its expression, runs the terrible risk of becoming de-humanized in the absence of a personal focus. The conscious acknowledgment of Jesus as a movement of God towards man, as the bearer of a saving revelation of Truth, seems to me of more than mere intellectual importance, for experience as a whole, does, I think, sufficiently witness that the vision of the Fatherhood, when it comes to us through the medium of the suffering Christ, is imbued with a wonderful fulness of spiritual power, and is able to touch the springs of the heart's devotion as no other expression of Truth has ever done in the long story of the human race.

In saying this Christians do not pass moral judgment upon those who differ from them. They have no right to do so. Too often in the practical witness of everyday life we have miserably limited and distorted the teaching and the witness of the Lord whom we would serve. During the last great struggle in

South Africa few have been more faithful in their protest against the degrading passions of the war-spirit than the Unitarian, and when we remember some of the sentiments so loudly expressed by professing Christians, who, forgetting the sad figure in the garden of Gethsemane, hastened to espouse a Hebrew God of Battles in their eagerness to justify their country, we may well be dumb.

There is indeed no sign of grace, despite the dark symptoms of prevailing materialism, more full of hope than the gathering determination to get behind the symbols of speech and the doctrines of the creeds, to the spiritual reality underlying them all. For long years it has seemed as if we were witnessing the steady attrition of faith subjected to the continual and effective bombardment of an informed and powerful criticism. But at last there are signs of change, signs of positive results arising out of what seemed a purely negative process. It is true that in the last hundred years more books have been written about Jesus than in any other century of the Christian era. The interest deepens. Whether we approach from the standpoint of the avowed agnostic or of the devout believer we must feel as though the world were trembling on the brink of a great spiritual discovery, as if in these modern days we were about to receive a clearer vision of God, a great fresh unfolding of His Will and of His Divine Sympathy, which will touch the heart of modern culture even as the fervid gospel of Wesley and Whitefield reached the buried life of the down-trodden and outcast in eighteenth century England. There is hope that the fruit of what we call



“Modern thought,” which, by the way, is strangely old, may be a richer life, a deeper unity, a melting of the hard lines of division between sect and sect, and that in the dissolution of stereotyped creeds we may find true brotherhood in a fuller interpretation of God’s Fatherhood, and unite in a living fellowship under the sway of the Christ’s compelling power. Creeds are milestones, doctrines are interpretations; Truth, as George Fox was continually asserting, a seed with the power of growth, not a fixed crystal, be its facets never so beautiful.

We shall be right, then, if we keep as close as we can to experience as our guide, and answer the question “What has Jesus to say to the Individual?” in the simple, untaught speech of unprofessional laymen.

If a thoughtful person were reading the gospels for the first time and were asked what he judged to be the dominant note of the message of Jesus, I think the answer would certainly be “The Fatherhood of God.”

What do I mean by that? The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man are unfortunately stock platform phrases and find but a weak illustration in the practical ways of shrewd, self-seeking business life—the life of the majority.

I will put it this way :—Here is the world with its tangible facts. I study it and find law everywhere, in the minutest cranny of the remotest mountains, in the stardust on the deep ocean floor, in the common daisy and the rarest hothouse bloom, in the smallest insect and in the elephant—it is all one. I cannot escape from it. I consider myself. I am one of millions, coming and going. I too am in the grip of



law, no account is apparently taken of my personal desires except in so far as they subserve this common law. I know absolutely nothing of a previous existence, absolutely nothing at first hand of a future existence. I see just what I do see and no more. I am like a cyclist on a dark night : the lamp of my reason and experience lights up just a very little of my road. But with this difference : I am not propelling my bicycle, and I cannot see what or who it is who controls the handle bars. I see no home lights in the gloaming shining for me, and yet however much I may long to dismount from my machine of life, however much I may dread my goal, I *must* go on. Must, and the darkness is very great. For example, I love someone dearly, my whole life is wrapped up in that life, the life of my friend, in closest unity of heart and sentiment. Suddenly in a few days, in a few hours, an unforeseen disease develops. Death strikes with savage knife. That friend is taken from me. I hear nothing, I see nothing more of him. I do not know where he is gone. I am left alone. All the little things we did and planned together bring a sharp pain to the heart as I think of them. They can never be again. Never. The future is desolate, the present is filled with an intolerable ache of hopeless longing. I pray till my heart breaks, but

“ no answer from on high  
Breaks the crystal spheres of silence,  
And no white wings downward fly.”

Again I reflect. This world is one of millions, perhaps the most powerful telescope can only reveal our neighbours, perhaps there are not only worlds

beyond worlds but systems of worlds beyond systems, without any end, perhaps they are all or mostly peopled and the hosts of individual souls are without number. Then who am I? Shall I not be cast as rubbish to the void? Can I, even I, count for anything in this vast scheme of things. In this ordered chaos of blind fate, can there be a meaning which will satisfy my hungry heart?

Suddenly I hear these words:—"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall upon the ground without *your Father*: but the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before *my Father* who is in heaven."

"*Your Father, my Father* who is in heaven." Who said that? Jesus. Ah! but it may be a gloss, an interpolation, something borrowed from Hillel, who knows? How can I be sure that he said it. How can I *know* that it is true? Look abroad, what do you find? Others suffering like you and passing through a like experience into a holy peace. How can they be peaceful and patient when you are hopeless and sad? Question them. They will tell you that the love of Jesus Christ has comforted them, that in learning to know him they have learnt to know God as a loving Father, that the presence of His love and the sense of His sympathy is so real and abiding that against the seeming cruelty of a bitter bereavement, there is no rebellion but through it all a sense of sweet surrender to a Heavenly Will.

“ I know not,” (says one of these) “ where His islands lift  
Their fronded palms in air,  
I only know I cannot drift  
Beyond His love and care.”

Climb the ladder of history. In every age you will find this human witness to the power of the revelation of Jesus, until you come step by step to Jesus himself. In the biographies of saints, the sufferings of martyrs, the daily itinerary of wayfaring men, in the experience of cultured and ignorant, rich and poor, slave and free, the chain of evidence is unbroken. Why should you set it aside ? It has its source in the dynamic personality of the suffering Christ. In the face of this broadening stream of influence you are not compelled to found your belief on an isolated text. Moreover the words quoted from Matthew are harmonious with the whole atmosphere of the Gospels, and whatever may be true of passages or fragments, no historical or literary criticism of real weight and insight will tolerate the supposition that they are altogether false. Read any able rationalist book, and there are none more able than J. M. Robertson's, and you will feel that while there may be much or little to modify in the historical details, the attempt to destroy the historicity of Jesus, or to deny him his broad characteristics as we know them in the pages of the New Testament, lands us in the insuperable difficulty of explaining the Christian Church, and still more the living power of Christianity, in progressive religious and social thought and life to-day. You cannot dig a huge hole in history and expect us to be satisfied if no attempt is made to fill it up. Yet in

effect that is what the rationalist plea amounts to. All this evidence of trustful faith in the love of a Heavenly Father, even when victoriously submitted to the sternest tests of which life is capable, is to go for nothing. The fact that before Christ there is no similar force of comforting assurance is to be lightly regarded, and the profound gulf which separates the life and death of Socrates, beautiful and moving though it was, from the life and death of Jesus, is to have no significance. I think we may safely say that, be the exact historical truth about Jesus what it may, there came with him into the life of men a unique revelation of the Fatherhood of God—of a Divine love and sympathy, tender, infinite in its scope, caring individually for the countless millions of individual souls. True or false, this revelation has been of the deepest moment, it has profoundly influenced civilization, and is directly or indirectly influencing it now. The pain of death and the mystery of life do, as a matter of tested experience, lose their terrors for those who are able, in the faith of God's Fatherhood, to fall back upon the strength of His everlasting arms. And as for the rationalists. I know nothing more wildly irrational than the chaos of a universe where trustful love is a delusion and all the deepest instincts of the human heart have no correspondence with outward reality. Such a universe is unthinkable—a dreadful nightmare. From the loneliness of the noblest pagans, as of all those without a sense of God, or oppressed with the weight of this weary world, the littleness of life and the uncertain hope of immortality, the Fatherhood of God has redeemed us.



But are we to stop here? Is this all that the revelation of Jesus implies? Does he simply draw aside the veil which hid the Father from us, or is there more? I think there is, and although it really flows from the revelation of the Fatherhood, we will treat it as a second and distinct consideration.

It is this, that in his message to the Individual, Jesus says *that Unity between Man and God is possible.*

Here again we are not dependent upon texts but have a "cloud of witnesses" who testify by their lives and writings that the veil between flesh and spirit is only thin to the eye of faith. Such men and women as St. Teresa and John Woolman, Mme. Guyon and George Fox, tell us in their different language the same story. They trusted the message of Jesus and they found, knew and possessed the love of God in their hearts. There can be no question that this possession was real, or if it *was* delusion then reality has no meaning. Delusive love does not radiate real warmth, and we have the witness of contemporaries to its magnetic and uplifting power.

But let us accept this and take our consideration under review,—that unity between man and God is possible. There are two things that would make it impossible :—

*First*, the intellectual inability to see and know God, an inability removed by the revelation of the Fatherhood.

*Second*, the love of fleshly things, absorption in the lower or animal life, the deliberate choice of what, in the light of a higher revelation, we know to be evil,—in a word, *sin*.



How is the second obstacle to be removed? What is the bearing of the teaching of the Fatherhood upon this terrible cause of separation?

Here we approach the central difficulties of the Christian position. It is in dealing with this aspect of the life of the soul that the use of theological terms, terms borrowed from the law-courts, or from the old Jewish Rabbis, taken bodily from an ancient civilization with its oriental modes of thought and expression, and set down, so to speak, without due adjustment or deduction, in our modern western life, has done untold mischief. There is nothing in the statement of Christian truth that is more generally unsatisfying than the doctrine of the Atonement. There is nothing that needs to be stated with more careful regard to the use of terms, or which needs more emphatically a reinterpretation in closer accord with the facts of the spiritual life. Unreality is so generally felt in this connection that the doctrine of the Atonement is gradually being left out of the pulpit *repertoire*, and unfortunately a good deal is going with it that ought to be retained. Let us endeavour to keep to the rules we have already laid down, and express in as simple language as may be, what is involved in the removal of sin as a barrier between man and God.

In making this statement I would urge three governing considerations :—

*First*, that we should test everything by Christ's conception of the Fatherhood of God. Whatever is inconsistent with that view, as we gather it from the Gospel narratives, must be dismissed.

*Secondly*, that we keep steadily before us the conditions of Paul's education, his Rabbinical training, the atmosphere of Jewish tradition which formed his environment, and hold ourselves prepared to translate his language into modern terms which, while they express his inner meaning, discard his symbolism, much of which is not only offensive but unintelligible to the uninstructed Western mind.

*Thirdly*, that we put out of our thoughts all theological battle cries, and approach the question from the standpoint of men, conscious of shortcomings and sin, who long for a living and saving knowledge of Eternal Truth.

I leave the doctrinal and scripture proof texts, which by the by, are generally torn up violently by the roots from the soil in which they grew and thrown about as missiles, regardless of the controlling significance of the little word *context*,—and make my statement in the light on the one hand of Christ's teaching of God's Fatherhood, and on the other of man's spiritual need.

To take up the proof texts one by one would be to set the cart before the horse. We must first clearly grasp the root idea, and then we shall be at leisure to examine the proof texts as we please. This, I think, must be a private occupation, not only because time fails us, but because the public discussion of a series of isolated texts is the same thing as not seeing the wood for the trees.

In the first place then, the revelation of the Fatherhood of God is unquestionably implied in the

parable of the Prodigal Son. It is implied or directly stated elsewhere again and again, but nowhere is it suggested in such tender and luminous form. God is represented as loving the sinner and forgiving him because of his repentance. There is no suggestion of any other condition—indeed the Elder Son is rebuked because he grumbles at what he regards as the excessive attention paid to his erring brother. This little touch seems designed expressly to emphasize the simplicity of the terms upon which the sinner gains or regains the Divine favour. Now let us translate this from the eastern parable into the conditions of our own experience. You are a father. A son of yours breaks away and goes wrong. He lives among dissolute companions, out of sight, out of touch with you and your ideas of life. You mourn in your heart for him. Your life is saddened by this great sorrow, for, of course, you love him, notwithstanding. Something, some circumstance or some holy influence, no matter what, converts your son to your view of life. He bitterly regrets his wasted years. He returns and asks forgiveness in full and sincere repentance. What do you do? Do you hold him at arm's length and talk about satisfying your sense of justice? Do you say that in order to forgive, some one else must be punished on his behalf? Nothing of the kind. All the pent-up love of years flows out at the instant as you clasp him to your breast. He might have had that love at any moment for the asking, upon the one condition of repentance, which indeed would be the condition of his desire. But has there been no punishment? Assuredly; there is never repentance without punish-

ment. Repentance implies shame and bitter regret for what has been wrongly done, it implies the pain of acknowledged shortcoming, it implies the smart and rankle of an uneasy conscience and injured self-esteem. Repentance is the burning out of the old sin, the cauterizing of the wounds of the soul, it is, it must be, a painful and an arduous process. And on the other side, you as a father have been bearing the burden of your son's sin. It has been a heavy weight upon your heart. It has taken away the sunshine from your life. Your son has been crucifying you, and you have borne pain for his sake. More than that, you have prayed and agonized for him in the secret of your closet. You have suffered vicariously—suffered for him.

Now suppose it is true that God was really in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. Find me anything in the teaching and life of Jesus to suggest that the love and character of God are of a different stamp of goodness from that to which Jesus calls us. Does not the grand truth of His revelation lie rather in this, that in a unique Divine-Human Personality we find not a yawning gulf separating us hopelessly from God, but a point of living contact, a witness to the essential unity in character which binds man to God and God to man? "I show you the Father," he says, and "I and the Father are one. I stoop to speak your language, to tell you of a higher civilization, a kingdom of heaven, and because I stoop to come within the reach of your intelligence, therefore the Father is greater than I, the creator is beyond your finite comprehension. But nevertheless in His



essential character He is comprehensible. His love, His sympathy I show you here in my life and in its extreme issue upon the cross." There is nothing here, nothing whatever, to justify a departure from the teaching of that wonderful parable of the Prodigal Son. God loves and forgives just in the same spirit in which a good earthly father loves and forgives. Ah, but you say, this destroys the terror of the Lord. If it is possible to come to God whenever we like, you say in effect, "Sin just as long as you please, and then when you are tired of it, give it up and turn to God." This might be a valid objection were it not for the condition of repentance. Sin carries its own bitter punishment with it, lust breeds satiety and loathing, and selfishness breeds a morose and sour spirit, joyless as a subterranean cavern. Hell is separation from God, and the longer we live in hell the harder it is to escape. Character congeals, as it grows it stiffens, and takes shape, ugly or beautiful according to our absence from God or His presence with us. There is indeed nothing weak or effeminate in the goodness of God as Jesus unfolds it. We speak of Jesus as the revealer, but remember that if he is the revealer of the Father, he is also the revealer of the sin that separates Him from His children. Let me quote Sabatier again :—

"So far from blunting the edge of the moral law, He sharpens it as one sharpens a dissecting knife in order the better to pierce the living flesh and penetrate to the very joints and marrow; He infinitely enhances the demands of the traditional ideal; from the outward act He descends to the inward feeling; He makes lust equal to adultery, and anger or hatred to murder itself. He tells His disciples to love their enemies, to pray for those who persecute



them, to answer violence by gentleness, and injuries by love. He speaks thus not to weaken the vigour of righteousness, but because He sees in love and gentleness a higher righteousness, and the sole means of securing the final triumph of good over evil. That is why the righteousness of His friends exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. It is no longer dictated by an outward letter, but it has, for soul, the very spirit of the Father, and, for inward rule, the ideal the Master has lit up in the conscience : “ ‘ Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.’ ”

Yet more, Jesus is not only the revealer of the Fatherhood or of sin, he is the revealer of the agony of God's heart under the burden of the sin of the world—that agony which a good earthly father feels for a lost and erring child. God knows the possibilities of the higher civilization of the Kingdom of Heaven, and by this He measures earth's failures. He sees under every roof, into every heart, every drunken orgie, every scene of lust and crime, every secret thought, pure or foul, every motive, lofty or selfish, are naked in His sight. Think how sin, seen in all its horrid ugliness, must wound His purity, how His love, active out-reaching, passionate, must yearn to save, to uplift and to redeem. Here the witness of the cross has its supreme mission. But what does the cross mean ? It is alas, no uncommon stumbling block that theology takes symbolism, an expressive or suggestive phrase, literally, and works out its blundering theses upon false assumptions. We talk, for example, of Jesus as the Son. Certainly he was the Son in his relation of perfect filial obedience to the Father, a relation in which he is for us the Way, the Truth and the Life, but I think we miss the deep significance of the cross, if

we set Jesus in antithesis to God and press the symbolism of the son too far. "I and the Father are one." That means to me that I think of God in terms of Jesus Christ, that I pray to Jesus as representing the Father to my consciousness, or to the Father as I see Him in Jesus. Carry that thought to Calvary itself. See in the Crucifixion not merely a martyr's death, not merely a passing gleam of God's love, certainly not a sacrifice to God carrying a legal significance, but in truth the flashing into light of an eternal fact, the nature of God's relation to sin, of the pain we inflict on His heart by our own wrong doing. Here is the wonderful dynamic of the Cross. God calls you to Him. He shows you His suffering, He shows you the hatefulness of the sin that caused it, and in showing you His love, shows you the punishment of alienation from Him, the hell of the unrepentant, in which we must remain until repentance opens the gate for the prodigal and gives entrance to the free forgiveness and love of the Father's house. In Jesus, in his life, and his death upon the cross, we are shown the nature of God, and the possibilities that are within our reach. We are shown the world as the Father sees it, are called to live in harmony with His will and purpose, to hate the sins that made Him mourn, to scale the barrier of sin and discover that the way of penitence lies open and direct to the Fatherly heart. No legal bargain, but a spiritual conflict, an inward change, the rejection of the living death of sin, the choice of the new birth, of the purified self, the conversion from a low and earthly to a high and spiritual standard of life and conduct,—here you have the practical conditions of salvation,

and in the active, free and holy love of God, ever seeking entrance, ever powerful if we but yield the gateway of our heart, is the substance of the Gospel. The revelation of God's Fatherhood and the possibility of unity with Him through Christ, meet the deep need of the soul for a centre of repose apart from the transitory interests and the things of time. Hear, then, the gentle appeal "Come unto Me and rest."

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds  
In a believer's ear ;  
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,  
And calms the troubled breast ;  
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,  
And to the weary rest.

"Dear Name, the Rock on which I build,  
My shield and hiding-place,  
My never-failing treasury, filled  
With boundless stores of grace.

"Jesus, my Shepherd, Saviour, Friend,  
My Prophet, Priest and King,  
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,  
Accept the praise I bring.

"I would Thy boundless love proclaim  
With every fleeting breath ;  
So shall the music of Thy Name  
Refresh my soul in death."

#### IV.

### WHAT HAS JESUS TO SAY TO THE STATE ?

*Scripture portion*—Galatians v. 13-25.

**M**ANDELL CREIGHTON, late Bishop of London, in a most interesting letter to an old friend of his, writes as follows upon the subject-matter of faith,—I quote fragmentarily :—

“ Pure reason leads nowhere. It is not a beginning. We act from the heart first, then the head explains. . . Love is the motive power. Life is only explicable as part of a general purpose, and our life is the development of our personality. . . This thought explains and justifies the nature of the revelation of God in Christ. God could be known in nature, in conscience, in history, but if He was to be thoroughly known, He must be known in a person. So Christ stands, the central fount of personality, who explains not my gifts, my attainments, my knowledge, my capacities, but *me*, that which lies beyond these, uses them, and gives them meaning and coherence. So He stands, the sustainer of all men, and I am led to Him by all my experience. . . Relationships, founded on a sense of lasting affection, are the sole realities of life. . . Faith is personal trust in a person.”

I read this letter after preparing my last paper, “ What has Jesus to say to the Individual ? ” and the sentences I quote from it seem to me both to sum up our argument so far as we have conducted it, and to introduce us to the question we have now to discuss,—  
“ What has Jesus to say to the State ? ”



If God has revealed His character in a personality and if that personality is Jesus Christ, then we are able to start from the knowledge of God's Fatherhood, we are able to interpret that fatherhood as involving active personal love for individual souls, freely and continually given, and to recognise in repentance the means by which we can convert the knowledge of the Divine Love into a realised fact, consciously accepting it as the propelling and guiding force in our lives. We have recognised that the great barrier to a living knowledge of God is not so much the mystery of being, with its vision of the bottomless chasms of space and the endless reaches of eternity, not so much difficulties of intellectual apprehension, as it is the terrible fact of sin, the conscious choice of selfish views of life, of mean and unworthy ends which effectually prohibit that true companionship with God which is the "saint's everlasting rest." Unity with God implies unity with Him in thought and action, what Paul meant by the mystic phrase, "being hid with Christ in God." To achieve this we have to burn out our old sins, to cauterize the wounds of the soul, to give our desire for holiness and God's desire for us, free play in our hearts. We have to effect a dynamic union of that which is best in us, with that which we know through Christ to be in the Father.

Out of such a union there spring certain consequences, both for the individual and for the state, consequences which are summed up in the word brotherhood, fruits which have been catalogued by an Apostolic writer as "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control."



Unfortunately the brotherhood of man is now a glib platitude, commonly accepted side by side with a view of life which is largely at variance with the essential spirit of brotherhood as expressed in Jesus.

We cannot, however, rest satisfied with mere pious patter, and we must ask ourselves what brotherhood ought to mean in recognised facts of experience, when taken as the corollary of God's declared Fatherhood.

In the first place, then, the teaching of Jesus, whether to the individual or to the state, is the teaching of social love. Love cannot be self-contained. The Gospels tell us this again and again in parables like that of the good Samaritan, and in more direct teaching: "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment, and the second *like unto it* is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "Ye have heard that it was said Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy, but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you, that ye may be the sons of your Father who is in heaven."

These are familiar not to say hackneyed quotations, continually repeated if too seldom put in practice, and sufficiently illustrate the justice of Mandell Creighton's deduction:—"Relationships founded on a sense of lasting affection are the sole realities of life."

The revelation of Jesus is indeed a revelation of

relationships, relationship with God, its character and possibility, and relationship with man. God is social, man is social, because God is Love, and because love expresses itself through personal relationships.

Dr. Rufus Jones, in his "Social Law in the Spiritual World," writes :—

"The older views of God regarded Him as being in another world, of totally other nature from our own and as being so absolute in Himself as to need nothing from us. These views did not fit our New Testament, but had been formed on the basis of a now dead philosophy and had become fixed and traditional. The doctrine of the conjunct and social nature of personality has made them impossible views for those who think. We realise now that our views of God must be grounded in the eternal nature of things, and conform to the inherent facts of personal life, and that means that this conjunct, or spiritual 'group' characteristic must run up to the highest scale of life, that even God finds His life and joy by going out of Himself and bringing other lives to Himself."

This view agrees at least with that prayer uttered under the olive trees at night by the Son of man in agony, "And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them and thou in me that they may be perfected into one."

And if we marvel how John could possibly have set down such a prayer in writing, it is at least organic with the whole life and teaching of the Master whom he portrayed with such rare intuition and sympathy. It is the teaching of the parable of the Vine and the branches, the thought of the kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Professor Everett has put the case for us

in a modern version of the old imagery, found in his "Immortality and other Essays."

"We ask the leaf, 'Are you complete in yourself?' and the leaf answers, 'No, my life is in the branches.' We ask the branch, and the branch answers, 'No, my life is in the trunk.' We ask the trunk, and it answers, 'No, my life is in the root.' We ask the root, and it answers, 'No, my life is in the trunk and the branches and the leaves. Keep the branches stripped of leaves and I shall die.' So it is with the great tree of being. Nothing is completely or merely individual."

No! nothing is merely individual. The supreme question of religion is personal salvation, the personal struggle to overcome evil and escape from the prison of selfishness into the freedom of sonship, but it is not individual. If we seek our lives we lose them. One of the most beautiful souls ever lit by the love of Christ was John Woolman, a poor unlearned working man of New Jersey, the friend of the slave and the apostle of the simple life.

Upon one occasion he lay sick on his bed of pleurisy. Hear what he says in that journal which Channing called "the sweetest autobiography in the language," and which Charles Lamb tells us to get by heart. Lying as it were in a trance he forgot his own name,—I quote his words:—

"Being then desirous to know who I was, I saw a mass of matter of a dull gloomy colour, between the south and the east; and was informed that this mass was human beings in as great misery as they could be and live, and that I was mixed with them, and that henceforth I might not consider myself as a distinct or separate being. In this state I remained several hours. I then heard a soft melodious voice, more pure and harmonious than any I

had heard with my ears before ; I believed it was the voice of an angel, who spake to the other angels ; the words were—‘ John Woolman is dead.’ I soon remembered that I was John Woolman, and being assured that I was alive in the body, I greatly wondered what that heavenly voice could mean. I believed beyond doubting that it was the voice of an holy angel, but as yet it was a mystery to me.

“ I was then carried in spirit to the mines, where poor oppressed people were digging rich treasures for those called Christians, and heard them blaspheme the name of Christ ; at which I was grieved ; for His name to me was precious. I was then informed that these heathen were told, that those who oppressed them were the followers of Christ ; and they said among themselves, ‘ if Christ directed them to use us in this sort, then Christ is a cruel tyrant.’

“ All this time the song of the angel remained a mystery ; and in the morning, my dear wife and some others coming to my bedside, I asked them if they knew who I was ; and they telling me I was John Woolman, thought I was light-headed ; for I told them not what the angel said, nor was I disposed to talk much to anyone, but was very desirous to get so deep, that I might understand this mystery. . . .

“ As I lay still for a time, I at length felt Divine power prepare my mouth that I could speak ; and I then said, ‘ I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.’ Then the mystery was opened, and I perceived there was joy in heaven over a sinner who had repented, and that the language ‘ John Woolman is dead,’ meant no more than the death of my own will.”

Here is the practical meaning of the teaching of Jesus, the flowering of Christian character in the fragrance of its proper bloom. It is the justification of the social gospel which men are preaching to-day. And the Gospel *must* be social. What we understand



by Evangelicalism—that is the Gospel expressed in the prevailing theology of fifty years ago, under the formula of the plan of salvation, was strong in its personal note, but its urgent plea to escape the wrath to come, weakened at once the thought of God's Fatherhood and its effective bearing on the oneness of humanity.

It almost became at times a "suave qui peut," a hurried retreat, without thought of fallen comrades, from the devastating range of the enemies' guns. I shrink even from an unintentional travesty of a movement which has worked miracles of redemption amongst the lost and degraded of our kind, miracles performed by men who felt that they must work as firemen work to save the helpless from the flames of a burning building. Yet this quotation from a notable sermon on the "Resurrection of the Dead" has its significance. I take it from an article in the November issue of the *Independent Review*.

"When thou diest thy soul will be tormented alone; that will be a hell for it; but at the Day of Judgment thy body will join thy soul, and then thou wilt have twin hells, thy soul sweating drops of blood and thy body suffering with agony. In fire exactly like that we have on earth thy body will be asbestos-like, for ever unconsumed, all thy veins roads for the feet of pain to travel on, every nerve a string on which the devil shall forever play his diabolical tune of hell's unutterable lament."

Read that with the parable of the prodigal son ! The thing is impossible. In the baleful gleam of those *post-mortem* terrors it is not difficult to see that the affairs of this world shrivelled to ashes, that morbid fears grew apace, that a spiritual selfishness, if I may use the term, found easy entrance into hearts prepared



by terror. Other-worldliness with its paralysing influence upon practical work, its spurious asceticism, its transference of all hope, and of the fruitful energies of the soul to objects beyond the limits of this human life, weakened the social conscience of the religious, and made it possible for inconsistencies in the social system to pass unchallenged. That which was strong and helpful in Evangelicalism sprang from the personal devotion to a personal Father. This faith struggling with the incongruous elements of a creed based in no small measure upon a misinterpretation of the office and message of Jesus Christ, has survived, and will doubtless emerge clearer and more robust, because no longer trammelled by a false theology.

It will lead us, nay, it *is* leading us, to seek here on this earth, and among the sins and sorrows of men, the materials for building the Holy City of God. It is not that the need for salvation is any less urgent, or any less personal than it was to the preacher who heard the terrible cry of the eternally lost ringing in his ears. It is rather that we know God better, trust Him more, and find not *only* beyond the grave the promise of His kingdom. Salvation must still retain its personal meaning, perhaps in the inevitable reaction from such teaching it has lost too much of this, but we give it, we must give it, a wider interpretation.

“ ’Tis not enough to weep my sins ;  
’Tis but one step to heaven ;  
When I am kind to others, then  
I know myself forgiven.”

We must learn the meaning of God’s fatherhood by giving the fullest content to the meaning of brother-

hood. We must recognise that because the individual stands in need of redemption from the power of selfishness, that therefore the State, that Society, needs salvation, and we must set about it in the spirit of William Blake when he exclaimed :—

“ I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,  
Till we have built Jerusalem,  
In England's green and pleasant land.”

What has Jesus to say then to the State? We must answer this by repeating what Jesus has to say to the individual. He shows us in himself the supremacy of unselfish love. He directs us to God as its source and centre. He calls us to walk in the *way* of his sacrifice, to trust in the *truth* of his unfolding, to live the *life* which he shows us to be at one with the life of the Father. Our existence, he says, is no aimless wandering, there is behind it no mockery of hope, no cruel sport with the heart's desire. Life has an eternal meaning which passes into vivid reality as we understand the message of Jesus and grasp the profound significance of his personality.

The way, the truth, the life, he is the reality of God, the interpretation of God's character, expressed in human speech, in a human life, the Divine made personal, the Infinite touching the finite, God at one with humanity, the unseen visible in the flesh, the soul's ladder reaching from the known to the unknown, in a word at once the dynamic and the goal of spiritual evolution.

But I repeat, that which he reveals to the individual cannot be confined to the individual. The

selfless love, the sympathy, and the passion of the cross are forever radiating outwards. Love is social. The standard for the individual is to be the standard for society. The Kingdom of God, the higher civilization of which Jesus was the messenger and prophet, has its seat in the heart, but its outward expression is an inevitable consequence of its inward reality, nay, it is the *test* of that reality. If, for example, the Fatherhood of God is real, and the brotherhood of man means that all men are the children of God, then the term brotherhood covers the whole human race and not merely the Anglo-Saxon, of whom in these imperial days we hear so much to the exclusion of the loftier and the larger thought of the Gospel. "There can be," says the Apostle who had broken with the narrowness of Jewish tradition, "neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female, for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus."

There is no national limit to the family of God. The tribal deity is dethroned. Most men, whether they are professed Christians or not, have a pretty clear idea of what individual fidelity to the life of Jesus would involve. They know it means unselfishness, the tender service of sympathy, the triumph of chastity, the surrender of the lower appetites and desires to the control of the higher impulses of the soul become urgent and authoritative through the knowledge of God in Christ. They see Jesus "clothed in the irresistible might of meekness" and they know that to believe in him, really means staking everything upon the victorious power of holy, selfless,

redeeming love. In the secret of their hearts men acknowledge this to be the greatest thing in the world, and whenever it is found in its pure, Christlike form, as we find it for example in St. Francis of Assisi and John Woolman, its wonderful magnetic and transforming power is at once felt. But most men, whether because they love the dust-heap, like the man with the muck-rake, and refuse to see the angel with the crown, or because they are too busy and have not time to think, or because they have more confidence in the world's prudence and the world's methods, are unwilling or afraid to make this great venture of faith. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. . . . thou shalt have treasure in heaven, . . . follow me."

Ah ! that is just what we will not do. We cling to the shekels of earth, and the treasures of heaven kick the beam. Our hesitancy to accept the full practical consequences of the Gospel is magnified in international conduct, which it goes far to explain. The individual has made some progress, be it ever so small, towards the Christian ideal of conduct. To kill a man in a quarrel is murder, to take his goods by force is theft, to ravage and destroy a man's property is violence, be the provocation what it may. To boast of your wealth, pedigree, strength, and to scoff openly at the weakness or poverty of your neighbour is bad form, not to be tolerated in polite society. Publicly to defame another's character is libel. But mark the transformation when we pass from the conduct of single individuals to the conduct of a group of individuals acting as a nation. To kill a man in a private quarrel



is murder, as a national quarrel it is a "regrettable necessity," rewarded however by every mark of public honour and popular acclaim.

To take goods by force in private life is theft, in national life the talk is of national destiny, spheres of influence, annexation, and under the plea of accepting the white man's burden, private companies exploit the lands of savages for the sake of dividends.

To boast of wealth and scoff at poverty in private life is bad form, in national life the parade of ships and troops, the loud trumpeting of orators, the slighting comments upon the shortcomings and peculiarities of the foreigner who serves in the Divine ordering as a counterfoil to our own virtues—all this is accepted by the crowd without question as the evidence of patriotism. The dominant note is self-praise, self-interest, and when the flag, country, national honour, are supposed to be at stake, the muddy depths are stirred by a yellow press, and there emerges naked and unashamed, the sheer blind hatred of the primitive savage. In the heat of quarrel brotherhood goes to the winds. Both disputants reach out for their bludgeons prepared to strike, and as passion rises the very pulpits join in the shouting. "Thank God," cries a Vicar, "we have done with the cowardice of the Sermon on the Mount." Love your enemies, did you say? Nay, says a Canon of the Church, "the Lord Jesus never says a word against war. . . . The history of the world is full of wars, thus must war be congenial to the mind of God in His evolution of humanity. What does God care for death? What does God care for pain?"



Writes another minister of religion, this time breaking into verse :

“ And as I note how nobly natures form  
Under the war's red rain, I deem it true  
That He who made the earthquake and the storm,  
Perhaps makes battles too.”

John Newton, who wrote the famous hymn,

“ How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,  
In a believer's ear,”

was a slaver, and as he paced his deck beneath which the victims of a foul traffic lay in chains herded like cattle, could say with perfect truth that he never enjoyed such sweet communion with his Maker as in the religious reveries of those deck promenades.

We must not judge too harshly those ministers of religion who, like John Newton, fail to realise all the significance of their words. It required for a generation the concentrated focus of Christian feeling and thought upon the iniquity of the slave traffic, to dispel the moral blindness of those who in all sincerity defended it. It will require a similar concentration to dispel the moral blindness which associates militarism with the love of God.

Read this extract from the newspapers as an example, side by side with the assertion that “ war must be congenial to the mind of God,” and remembering him whose life was peace, and who called men from their loneliness and suffering to come unto him and rest, we cannot for one moment justify the passions of war in His name.

"The temper of the combatants (I quote from the 'Yorkshire Post') has reached an absolutely merciless pitch. No quarter is given on either side, and flags of truce and surrender are disregarded.

"In one of the recent assaults 600 Japanese hoisted the white flag but the Russians ignored it, and the Japanese in the rear, enraged at the action of their comrades, assisted the Russians to shoot them down. Every man fell, and the piteous appeals of the wounded were unheeded. Within a week the last arm had signalled its unregarded prayer, and the shambles where the 600 had fallen, was a place of horror."

The terrible gap between the morality of individual and of national conduct, where theft becomes annexation with its thousand excuses, where boastful pride becomes patriotism, and a quarrel leading to violence and murder becomes war with an army for a bludgeon, is indeed one of those fatal inconsistencies which go far to discredit Christianity in the eyes of thoughtful doubters at home and of the heathen abroad. The missionary in China with the Sermon on the Mount in his hand, sadly confesses the obstacle presented by that criminal policy which literally forced a poisonous drug upon the Chinaman at the point of the bayonet; and when we talk of evangelizing South Africa, we may well wonder how the Kaffir will regard the brotherly love of Christians after we have paraded before him the long panorama of a cruel and devastating war?

Already we ridicule the duel, demanding that individuals shall settle differences in courts of law, and there is no logical defence for denying the same principle in the intercourse of nations. International

wars must go the way of private and tribal wars, and international differences must be settled as they are already often settled, in international courts.

It is true that Jesus never categorically condemned war, as he never categorically condemned slavery, but both are alien to his teaching, foreign to the whole temper of his Gospel, and a defiance of the Fatherhood of God. Nor is the Old Testament any justification. The distinction drawn in the Gospels is explicit.

“Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour but hate thine enemy, but I say unto you, Love your enemies.”

Elizabeth Barrett Browning exclaims :—

“And soon we shall have thinkers in the place of  
fighters. . . .

What ye want is light, indeed

God’s light organized

In some high soul.”

The thinkers, men like Herbert Spencer and John Morley, have already exposed the costly futility of militarism, its intellectual absurdity, its direct opposition to all true social progress, its menace to the liberty of the people ; but that which will overthrow it will be “God’s light organized” in a Christian community. For the sin of militarism is that it delays the coming of the Kingdom, as it is the sin of the Church of Christ that it wavers between the Spirit of the Cross and the Spirit of the Sword.

It may be true that in the progress of evolution war and slavery have been inevitable factors, it is true

that even to-day men are not ready for disarmament, and it is unquestioned that, as in the case of shipwrecks or mine disasters, war has been and is the theatre for the display of a lofty heroism and a noble self-sacrifice. But just as we would not dream of arranging for annual shipwrecks to encourage heroism, so we cannot maintain war for the same purpose, and if evolution means progress, if civilization as Christ foreshadowed it has any worth, any beauty, any moral grandeur, any spiritual grace, we must seek all means to escape from past traditions to a deeper and truer view of life.

It is the duty of the Christian Church to realise in common experience and intercourse the ideal of her Master. Were she consistent to his teaching the armies of Europe would melt like snow in spring-time, and the vast enginery of war pass like an evil dream.

This thought brings us from the consideration of international relations to that which must ultimately transform them. I mean the spiritual temper of the peoples in whose name acts of war and deeds of violence are done. What Jesus has to say to the State concerns not only the question of foreign politics, but most intimately the welfare of the State itself. Raise the spiritual temperature of the people, and instead of the spectacle of Christian ministers writing heathen apologies for a barbarous survival, war disappears. Raise the spiritual temperature of the people, and instead of twisting the saying, "The poor ye have always with you" into an excuse for the selfishness of wealth, the grinding poverty of a third of the population becomes an evil too heavy to be borne.



I remember hearing the battle-hymn of the Republic sung by thousands in Broadway, before the office of the *New York Journal*, during the Spanish-American war. The shameful sequence of events in the Philippines was still a matter of unwritten history, but even then, in the fierceness of the crowd thinking more of the destruction of the American warship *Maine* (for the words "Remember the Maine" hung in great letters before their eyes) than of the Cuban *reconcentrados*, and intoxicated by the magnificent roll of the music, the last verse jarred painfully in the contrast of its spirit :—

"In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,  
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me,  
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,  
While God is marching on."

Aye ! take your revenge and "Remember the *Maine*" while God is marching on. The scene has an impressive witness to the facility with which men bind up the name of Christ with ideas altogether at variance with his Gospel. We may, however, redeem that hymn from its relation to the slaughter of men, and accept it as an interpretation of the message of Jesus to the State :—

"As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,  
While God is marching on."

"He that seeketh his life shall lose it and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." If brotherhood involves the disappearance of militarism and the growth of a fraternity of nations, what does it involve within the community itself ? In what sense are we



to die to make men free? Not perhaps in a literal sense, though this has happened and will happen again, but certainly in a spiritual sense, in the sense in which John Woolman realised it when he saw in his vision that the loss of his name meant the death of his own will.

I think everyone who has at all escaped from the frozen grip of indifference, who has entered even a little into the sufferings of Christ, must have felt more than a vague unrest at the extravagant indulgence of the rich, and the miserable stunted life of the poor. There is in it something so flagrantly inconsistent with the spirit of Him who came as a servant to minister, as a physician to heal, and as a Saviour to redeem. With its stern struggle for bare existence, with its luxurious vice and its hopeless penury, its aggressive selfishness and its bitter despair, our social fabric is remote indeed from the city of brotherly love, the city of our dreams.

Hell, said someone, is a place much like London. We may reject that exaggeration, but the social worker will tell you that in tens of thousands of homes the spirit of hell does in truth reign. The problem of that great city crushes as one contemplates it, yet London only repeats in the gathered volume of some five million voices what we hear in fainter tones elsewhere. Thirty per cent. of our people live more or less in the abyss of poverty. The imagination cannot interpret that fact. The most we can do is to lift a corner of the curtain that hides the buried lives of the unfortunate from us.

Consider this deliberate statement made after a careful survey of the poverty of a neighbouring city,

namely, "that the wages paid for unskilled labour are insufficient to provide food, shelter and clothing adequate to maintain a family of moderate size in a state of bare physical efficiency."

The writer I quote continues :—

"And let us clearly understand what 'bare physical efficiency' means. A family living upon the scale allowed for in this estimate must never spend a penny on railway fare or omnibus. They must never go into the country unless they walk. They must never purchase a half-penny newspaper or spend a penny to buy a ticket for a popular concert. They must write no letters to absent children, for they cannot afford to pay for the postage. They must never contribute anything to their church or chapel, or give any help to a neighbour which costs them money. They cannot save, nor can they join sick club or Trade Union, because they cannot pay the necessary subscriptions. The children must have no pocket-money for dolls, marbles or sweets. The father must smoke no tobacco, and must drink no beer. The mother must never buy any pretty clothes for herself or for her children, the character of the family wardrobe as of the family diet being governed by the regulation 'Nothing must be bought but that which is absolutely necessary for the maintenance of physical health, and what is bought must be of the plainest and most economical description.' Should a child fall ill, it must be attended by the parish doctor; should it die, it must be buried by the parish. Finally, the wage-earner must never be absent from his work for a single day."

These are hard conditions, but beneath these there are yet lower depths of misery.

Need we wonder that the tender conscience of John Woolman was burdened by the sense of social injustice, or that he cried out continually against the selfishness of the rich. His counsel, steeped in the

wisdom and spirit of his Divine Master, is faithful and searching in its loving solicitude :

“ It is good,” he says, “ for those who live in fulness to cultivate tenderness of heart, and to improve every opportunity of being acquainted with the hardships and fatigues of those who labour for their living, and thus to think seriously with themselves : Am I influenced by true charity in fixing all my demands ? Have I no desire to support myself in expensive customs, because my acquaintances live in such customs ?

“ If a wealthy man, on serious reflection, finds a witness in his own conscience that he indulges himself in some expensive habits, which might be omitted consistently with the true design of living, and which, were he to change places with those who occupy his estate, he would desire to be discontinued by them,—whoever is thus awakened will necessarily find the injunction binding, ‘ Do ye even so to them.’ Divine Love imposeth no rigorous or unreasonable commands, but graciously points out the spirit of brotherhood and the way to happiness in attaining which it is necessary that we relinquish all that is selfish.”

Time does not permit us to pursue this subject, nor is this the place for elaborate schemes of reform. We are not indeed concerned with them to-night. We are concerned rather with that view of life and its responsibility which arises naturally from the teaching of Jesus to the individual and to the state, and which, as we are faithful to his conception of God’s Fatherhood and of the all-embracing unity of the family relationship in His great household, we shall accept as our guide. We cannot live to ourselves, even if we would. It matters infinitely *how* we live to others. Rooted in the love and power of Christ we shall not dare to be satisfied with spasmodic service. Brotherhood is not

a question of bazaars, of subscriptions, of occasional charities paid as doles to conscience, or the gifts of lightly missed etceteras from the full basket of pleasure. It is the question of a life of stewardship given in all its energies and purposes to the common good. No other life is the complete Christian life. No other life is at once so hard and so easy. It is the way of the Cross, but its guerdon is a crown. Let us then make the venture of faith. The steady, persistent bending of all powers of mind and heart to the formation of a real fraternity of free, equal spirits, whether it be by the laborious study of economics, or the homely offices of neighbourly love, whether it be by the public advocacy of an ennobling cause, or the private outpouring of the healing gift of sympathy, shall prove the golden age sung by saints and seers, no unavailing dream. This is the flowing of the sap from the Vine into the branches, the unity of the root with the leaves, the work of Christ continued in his disciples who realise their lives in him and find life's sacrament in surrender.

"To lessen the distresses of the afflicted and to increase the happiness of the creation, here," says John Woolman, "we have a prospect of one common interest from which our own is inseparable, so that to turn all we possess into the channel of Universal love, becomes the business of our lives."

"The world sits at the feet of Christ,  
 Unknowing, blind and unconsolated ;  
 It yet shall touch His garment's fold,  
 And feel the heavenly Alchemist  
 Transform its very dust to gold."\*

\* Whittier.



## V.

### FAITH AND LIFE.

*Scripture portion*—Ephesians iii. 14-19.

IN discussing the inner meaning of Religion we shall need to preface our consideration by the recognition of some current facts and difficulties.

We may, for instance, as we observe the striking statistical evidence of growing indifference to public congregational worship query what is worship? And the question would be far from untimely. Judging by the facts there is apparently increasing dissatisfaction with forms and ceremonies, however ancient or historic. Even the basis of church fellowship appears to be under review. Men are groping after some system more human and intimate, which shall express in a less rigid form of worship the gathering sense of social needs. An enquiry on these lines would however soon make it evident that we must go deeper than social needs to explain the cause of the unrest laid bare by the London census and the investigations of Charles Booth. These reveal a widespread sense of unreality, affecting not only those who stray abroad to graze in alien pastures, but running through the most carefully tended flocks. The attempt to give a warmer social colouring to church life is full of hope and far from superfluous, yet it is continually frustrated of its object by the want of intellectual and spiritual grasp upon the vital truths of the soul's



experience. It is not enough to change methods, to set up an institutional church with clubs, smoke-room, games-room, lectures, reading circles, and the like, that which is of supreme importance, which overshadows every question of church organisation, and which really leads us to the inner meaning of religion is the question of the message. Can we say that the view of life through which a congregation has been gathered is quick with the compelling power of a great unrealised spiritual and social ideal? Is it a view of life at all, or is it only a dead tradition?—a concession to the conventional respectability of the modern Pharisee who wears a top hat instead of phylacteries, and prays in the front pew instead of the market place? Is the sermon preached because it is the accepted thing that it should be preached, something that is as much a part of the settled constitution as the Union Jack and the British Lion, or because the preacher has something within him from God which *must* find utterance, which he *dare* not withhold?

In answering such questions we should finally be driven to conclude that worship consists not in singing hymns, not in preaching, not in listening to sermons, though all these functions have their necessary place in public gatherings for worship, both as stimulants and as means, but that worship, the end to which these means might minister, implies the individual movement of the soul towards God, the concentration of all its energy in the inward silence of the heart upon the realisation of the fact and presence of the sympathy and life of God. “The sort of belief which religion requires is one which is immediate, very vivid, very

moving to the affections, and very influential upon action." This is the belief which should grow out of worship, a true and conscious union of the soul with the will and power and love of the unseen Spirit.

Such worship cannot be performed by proxy ; no priest, no minister, no other person can take our place in this supreme effort of the soul ; it must be our own proper work and exercise. It lies beyond ritual or sermon, nay, it is best performed in outward silence (a silence for which all denominations, and not only the Society of Friends, might arrange with real spiritual profit in their public worship), when the individual, stripped of all self-deception, is drawn back from his dependence upon external things, upon sweet music, for example, or upon pulpit eloquence, and forced down on to the bare realities of the inward life.

The questions raised by this discussion will carry us a step further. If there is unreality in worship, we say that there is need of a living message going home to the heart and conscience, of union with God as the fruit of worship. But how can we have these without faith ? How can faith be, unless we can in some way or other understand God, see Him and know Him in history, and in contemporary life ? Can we thus see Him and know Him ? *May* we, in short, *believe* in God ? The difficulties are great. The problem of life is so complex. Life is so profound a mystery. Whence came man ; whither is he going ? What is the meaning of sin, pain, death, the seeming injustice which metes out at the very cradle luxury and pleasure to one, poverty or disease to another ? Behind the conflict of existence, the fatalism of law,

the terrors of an unknown eternity and of fathomless space, what is there? Is there any fact which can save me from that intolerable loneliness which assails me even in the midst of friends, and the affairs of life? Is there any fact in the Universe which can drive out the secret despair bred in my heart by the sense of my impotence, and my insignificance, one as I am of countless millions coming out of the black unknown and passing out again through death, to the black unknown, upon one only among countless millions of worlds.

Is there any fact in the universe that can rob death of its sting, the grave of its victory, and give nobility and purpose to my being?

To seek our answer we may explore in three directions which can be described respectively as the *intellectual*, the *scientific*, and the *personal*. The intellectual we shall find inadequate, because God, the ultimate fact of which we are in search, is not evolved at the end of a process of reasoning in mere "quod erat demonstrandum" fashion. The intellectual faculties of reasoning and logic, have of course their most important place, but they are only valid in co-operation with other faculties of observation and apprehension which the intellectual method, followed exclusively, does not call into play. You cannot argue a man into belief in God. You cannot arrive at God's character, even if you can prove His existence, merely by the sequence of logical demonstrations.

The scientific we shall find inadequate, because by itself the study of nature cannot lead us to the know-

ledge of a God who answers the questions of the heart and satisfies its craving. Nature shows us law in every nook and cranny of the Universe, but it cannot reveal a God of personal love. Some people think it can, but the real truth is that, like the Roman Catholic in his cult of the Virgin, they read into the goddess or principle they call Nature that which they have unconsciously borrowed from Jesus Christ. To be strictly scientific in the accepted sense of the term is to be strictly agnostic. Science has its legitimate field and its legitimate methods, although, like the theologian at whom he so often girds, the scientist is not without his prejudices and his narrow dogmatism. He is to be respected when he speaks according to what he knows. His knowledge is at least something more learned by man about God. Unless we are to fall into an ancient fallacy and exclude God from His universe, we must regard every fact of science as a fresh revelation of His creative activity and power. Nevertheless, scientific knowledge lies on a plane different from that on which the knowledge we seek is to be found. The fact that radium emits heat without apparent diminution in bulk, or that there are magnetic streams radiating from the sun, and disturbing our magnetic needles at regular intervals, or even the biological fact of our descent from the anthropoid apes and all that this descent implies, cannot help a man to resist a present temptation, or to face death with Christian confidence and hope. Science by itself, is, and must always remain, powerless to give us a God who will draw out the tendrils of the human heart towards Himself.



We turn then to the personal method. We reflect that we are after all personal, and that all our contacts with each other are personal. We may, if we please, denounce an anthropomorphic God, by which terrible formula I suppose we mean that God is the mere gigantic shadow of our reflected selves cast, like the spectre of the Brocken, upon the clouds of our imagination. But in any case unless we can apprehend God personally, that is, within the limits of our personal nature and understanding, or to put it in other words, unless God can interpret Himself in some way within the limits fixed by our human conditions and capacity, He must by the terms of the case, remain for ever invisible and unknowable to man.

We are bound to fall back on experience. Is it true that God has never so interpreted Himself? Does the intellectual evidence, such as it is, for a controlling mind in the universe, does the practical evidence, such as it is, of coherence and purpose in Nature, unite with any evidence of personal experience which permits us to add the dynamic formula "God is Love"? In both cases the answer of contemporary experience and of history is unquestionably *yes*, it does. Then where is this revelation? In unnumbered human lives. Martyrs and saints, famous in story, plain men and women whose memory no illuminated *Acta Sanctorum* has rescued from oblivion, whose chronicles are the tales of mean streets, unite in an uninterrupted witness which flows forward, a broadening stream of testimony through the years and the centuries. What is the source of this testimony? There are many springs more or less pure and



constant, under the shadow of the Himalayas, among the hills of Greece, in the plains of China and of Egypt, but there is only one spring adequate in volume, altogether pure and inexhaustible, a spring which upon a time broke forth in the hills of Galilee and now flows continually in the heart of man. The test of living power in actual experience points to one Divine Human life in history, as the supreme revelation of God. That life is the life of Jesus Christ. That life interprets all other lives governed by its spirit, that life has brought with it a view of God which although it does not explain the mystery of being, makes our individual striving intelligible, and gives the Divine sanction to all that is pure, holy and unselfish. It identifies the highest love we know in man with the character and purpose of the eternal governing power of the universe. This is not theory, but a statement of experimental truth tested by the severest methods known to men and devils. The fires of persecution and the tortures of the rack, or better still (for intellectual obstinacy or the tenderness of conscience in mistaken beliefs may bear these tests), the humdrum of everyday life and the witness of character blossoming to beauty under pain and sorrow,—these tests have been and are continually applied, with the result that the faith in God as revealed in Jesus Christ, after nineteen centuries of conflict, misinterpretation and criticism, remains dominant and victorious.

This is surely a stupendous fact which no spectre of the Brocken theory can possibly explain. It looms so large in history that it would be childish, nay, unscientific, to brush it aside. In any earnest

quest after God the enquirer must sooner or later come face to face with Jesus Christ.

But then arises the difficulty of the Scripture records. Is the Bible Inspired? Are not the gospels challenged as historical records? And if we are to give up the infallibility of Scripture how can we rely upon the historicity of Jesus? The trouble with such questions is that people continually forget that the real basis of faith is not, never has been, and never will be, an infallible book. The Bible is the gathered literature of a people, intensely human, wide in its range and variety, unequal in its spiritual value. Its inspiration is to be judged by the simple test of its ability to inspire, and its value lies, not in its supposed infallibility, but in its record of phenomena unique in human experience, illustrating the working of God in the human heart, and, above all, the message, life and death of Jesus Christ, and the beginnings of the Christian Church. The theory of an infallible text is purely mechanical, not spiritual, and inasmuch as the theory dehumanizes the Bible, while distorting its really Divine quality into a parody of the fact, it has worked untold mischief, destroying the sense of reality and lowering the Bible to the level of an idol or a fetish. We may indeed welcome in the higher critic and all that he signifies a return to an intelligent belief in the divine worth of the Scriptures, confident that scholarly and reverent study of material so rich in spiritual teaching must be increasingly fruitful. Truth can never be destroyed, in the fiercest light of criticism it can never suffer.

If some misconceptions have to be removed, if

here we took for history what was really folk-lore, or there we read as canonical a text that was interpolated, faith will ultimately be clearer and stronger for the correction. But of this we may be perfectly sure, that whatever may be the ultimate results of the development of honest, scientific, Biblical criticism, nothing can eliminate the person of Jesus nor weaken the value of a single text which is spiritually true. If we attempt to prove that Jesus never lived, that he is a mere literary creation, an amalgam of Greek and Jewish thought, we have then to explain the Christian Church, and the dynamic of the personal revelation of Jesus in modern life. The fact is that the Bible is not apart from human history, but organic with it. The evidence for Jesus does not rest upon the Gospels alone, it rests also upon the history of two thousand years, a history unintelligible and impossible apart from him, and finally upon the living witness of the heart, a combined testimony which must increasingly vindicate the broad, substantial truth of the Gospel records.

“So long,” says Erskine of Linlathen, “as a man receives his Christianity merely on the authority of a church or a book—so long as it has not commended itself to his higher reason and moral sense, or reached his inner consciousness—he has no real hold of Christianity; he is believing only in his church or in his book.”

The correspondence of the conscience with the teaching of the Bible is its surest defence.

Freed from this entanglement we are at liberty in the pursuit of our message to consider *what Jesus had to say to the individual*. God is no longer an

unknowable "first cause," but a Father who cares alike for each one of us, whose love is warm and personal, radiating outwards with continual activity, not different from human love save in its absolute purity, and the depth and range of its sympathy. Nothing shuts us out from the full benefit of that love but our own will. Repentance is the one condition of sonship and forgiveness. God must find in us some likeness to Himself before He can make Himself felt and known. To be at one with God, is to accept His love and to recognise His will as a governing principle. We must therefore turn towards Him and view life in some measure as He views it, hating indifference sloth, impurity, and selfishness as He hates them. There must be some point of contact between our souls and His, and to secure this we must cut down the hedge of prickly cactus which sin has reared about the soul. Or to put it more accurately, His pierced hands cannot break through to draw us out until we on our side of the fence begin the work of pulling down. If we will do this His response is instant, even when it is not recognised, for His love is unsleeping in its continual watch to seek an entry in the heart for which it yearns. Some regard this view of the Divine relationship as too easy. Sin, they say, must be punished before God can forgive. Eternal Justice must be satisfied. The answer is complete, there *is* punishment. Justice *is* satisfied and this without any legal figment. Sin, not as a theory but as a matter of fact, carries its own punishment with it. Repentance is not a trivial or easy matter, it involves the tearing up of evil growths by the roots, and often alas, a torn and



bleeding heart. Repentance implies not only the joy and peace of surrender, the escape to a quiet haven from a sea of storms, but the sharp pain of acknowledged shortcoming, the bitterness of remorse for wasted years.

It is in relation to this fact, to the terrible hold of sin upon human nature, of the magnitude of the moral effort which repentance often involves, that the personal message of a suffering Redeemer has its supreme importance.

“All that is fair and beautiful,” says Mrs. Besant, “in Christian morality has been taught in the world ages before Christ was born.” That may be more or less true, but the statement misses the point. Some seem to imagine that the soul of truth can exist in unvarying definiteness without a body of historic fact, without an embodiment, a witness, a type of the truth. Matthew Arnold hints at the real need of humanity when he says:—“A correct scientific statement of rules of virtue has upon the great majority of mankind simply no effect at all.” Jesus did not come to contradict what had been truly said by others before his time, *He came to personify the truths they expressed.* The Gospel is not a mere code of morals, it is Jesus, and Jesus is himself the dynamic of moral force. In him God has spoken, in him God lays bare His heart, he reveals love, he reveals sin, he shows us that there is no gulf of radical difference between his nature and our own. He shows us the possibilities of our life, exposes with merciless truth the barren emptiness of existence apart from him, and pleads with tenderest passion for the life union with the Divine harmony and



love. Upon the cross, the witness to an eternal fact, the suffering inflicted upon the loving heart of the Father by the sin of the world is exposed in its true nature, and the appeal of God takes its most vibrant and urgent note.

As in the life of Christ the virtues of humility, meekness, sympathy, and purity receive the sanction of the Divine nature and are for ever identified with it, so upon the Cross the quality of the Divine self-sacrifice is revealed, and self-sacrifice for ever identified with God.

Here is the focus of the message of Jesus to the individual. It is at once a vivid illumination of the true issues before the soul, and an intense and urgent appeal from the heart of God to the heart of man, written, spoken, in language man can understand.

From this appeal flow practical consequences. The life Jesus unfolds to the individual is not different for the state. The wars of international jealousy, the huge enginery of militarism, the selfishness of the rich, and the evils of poverty, are alike inconsistent with the higher civilization to which Jesus calls us, they are alien and hostile to the nature and purpose of God.

I do not deceive myself by the supposition that in this statement of Christian truth I have put even a tithe of the objections which earnest doubt may have to offer. Points of view are so different, the deepest thoughts are so hard to express, that it would be impossible within the limits of a public lecture even to state, much less to anticipate (were that within my power), every intellectual difficulty, or to render

exactly the different shades of meaning which words convey. At best words are but symbols. The term fatherhood as applied to God, and the term son as applied to Jesus, are for example symbolic of ideas which it is intended to associate with God and with Jesus, and to express the oneness in essence which runs from man up to God through Jesus, rather than to be interpreted as a scientific statement of fact. Often those who have been separated from each other by the intellectual forms of their belief, and have perhaps discussed their differences with not a little of that unhappy temper which so often mars theological disputes, have been really quarrelling about a superficial difference due to the imperfections of human speech, and concealing a fundamental unity upon which fellowship might have been based.

Recognising these difficulties of mental *approchement* I must nevertheless assume for the sake of argument that we are agreed in the presentation of the Gospel which has just engaged us, and I pass therefore to the concluding question :—If these things be true, how may we appropriate their truth? What is the inner meaning of religion?

In discussing this question we shall, I think, find ourselves at length upon common ground. For although the diversities of individual outlook are great, the needs and experience of humanity are universal and the same.

Moreover, it is one thing to have clear intellectual views, another to be pure and unselfish. Clear views are an incalculable gain, they add to the efficacy of faith, but they are the means, not the end or object

of faith. The end is neither philosophy nor theology, neither creed nor formula, but simply character redeemed and possessed by the power of love.

It is a great mistake to think that faith is exclusively or even mainly an affair of the head. It is mainly an affair of the heart, a question of the spiritual temper or attitude of the soul. As William Law expresses it in one of his essays, faith "is a living, working power of the mind, that wills, desires, and hopes and trusts and believes and obeys." Aye, *obeys*. That is where our faith is weak. That is where we need the potency of the Gospel. We know better than we do. Perceiving the good we continually choose the evil.

Let us put the case as a matter of personal experience, for we are here at the intensely personal centre of all religion. We are face to face with the question of personal salvation. I am, shall we say, the average man. I have none of the vices which shock public opinion or bring me under the penal laws framed by society to protect itself and its respectability. I have more or less, perhaps in a neutral fashion, the good esteem of my fellows. I pay my debts, live within my income, am indulgent to my family and—to myself. Every now and then I am stirred by something of which I read or hear, the distress of the unemployed or some peculiar case of trouble, and for a brief space am unusually charitable. I give a guinea, ten guineas, fifty guineas. I speak at a meeting, I attend a bazaar, and then by imperceptible degrees slip back into my normal forgetfulness. If anyone were to charge me with unorthodoxy I should

be painfully shocked. I read the Bible, perhaps sometimes wondering what I have read five minutes afterwards. I go certainly once, perhaps under favourable circumstances twice, to church, chapel or meeting. I don't understand what is meant by the Trinity or the Atonement ; I leave all that to the clergyman or the minister, but in a more or less definite way I believe that my earthly life is so irreproachable that my eternal future is sure to be pleasant. Christ, I say, is my Saviour, by which I mean (if I were ever so brutally frank with myself, which I am not) that he will leave me alone in this world, and save me in the next. So I go on. Now and then someone upon whose companionship I depend is called beyond the grave. On such occasions I am deeply touched. It is always hard to say good-bye to one's friends. I have solemn thoughts, not unmingled with self-pity. I feel stirred for a time to double my devotions. And then the tide of life, business and pleasure flows in again. The gap is filled. I forget, and once more am satisfied to live on the surface. I flutter through the hours like a butterfly in a meadow—dipping aimlessly now here, now there. But let us suppose that the strong blow of some great catastrophe were to smite me. Something that destroyed the routine of self-pleasing and compelled me to face the realities which I have so steadfastly shirked. Let it be some permanent physical restriction like blindness, or some financial disaster involving penury—no matter what. Where do I stand now ? What is there in this life of mine that is real, what is there that carries comfort with it through the long years yet to come ? Little or nothing.



I have spent my life for things that have irrecoverably passed with time. They cost me much once, they are worth nothing to me now. Everything is bitter, life and the interminable future are desolate. Suddenly I realise that my Christ was a lay figure. I made him and draped him myself. I realise that at the heart of what I called my religion was but selfishness, that my faith was self-deception, and that my insincerity has brought upon me the doom of spiritual emptiness. I have nothing to carry me with hope and confidence through the gates of death. "The heresy of all heresies," says William Law, "is the worldly spirit." There are tens upon tens of thousands of such heretics, living upon make-believe and taking it for belief. God save us from lives like theirs, from good-natured indifference, the indolence of slumbrous souls.

But how are we to be saved? How are we to realise the Christ of our Gospel? "If a man be sincere," says a recent writer, "then his sincerity is the hammer that drives his belief home, and the stronger the sincerity the deeper will the practical point of the belief penetrate into his life and conduct." Beyond all question a first consideration is sincerity, the sincerity born for example of conviction for sin and the desire for pardon. We must honestly seek the true life, we must honestly wish to escape the toils of self-love. Assume this sincerity. Assume for example that I have grown dissatisfied with a drifting life, that I have felt a touch of that satiety which is the scourge of the worldling. How then am I to set about the business of salvation? I turn to Christ, the Christ of the Gospels. What is salvation by Christ? It is



nothing mysterious, it is to be made like unto him. Again I quote from William Law :—

“ Wherever thou goest, whatever thou dost, at Home or Abroad, in the Field, or at Church, do all in a desire of union with Christ, in Imitation of His Tempers and Inclinations, and look upon all as nothing, but that which exercises and increases the Spirit and Life of Christ in thy Soul. From morning to night keep Jesus in thy Heart, long for Nothing, desire Nothing, hope for Nothing, but to have all that is within thee changed into the Spirit and Temper of the Holy Jesus. Let this be thy Christianity, thy Church, and thy Religion. For this New Birth in Christ thus firmly believed and continually desired, will do everything that thou wantest to have done in thee, it will dry up all the Springs of Vice, stop all the workings of Evil in thy Nature, it will bring all that is Good into thee, it will open all the Gospel within thee, and thou wilt know what it is to be taught of God.”

Here we have the method, not only of the mystic, but of every soul who has sought God through Christ. It is the method of experiment. The test of the Christian life from the inside. A cathedral window is ugly enough until you look through it from within, and then the dull leaded glass with its meaningless contortions of device, flashes into ordered beauty. Moreover, it is an experiment which again and again has vindicated the method, in the evolution of character fragrant with peace and love, breathing the benediction of holy calm upon the fever of a restless heart.

But we must know the *steps* of this pilgrim's progress. Let me state the case again in terms of personal experience. I determine to seek this peace of God till I find it. My sincerity is not to be doubted.

I am earnest in my quest. So far so good. I have the first condition requisite. I am willing to pull down the prickly cactus hedge of my sins. I realise that self is the devil's workshop. I want to get away from the prison of my selfishness. I want to realise love. But I am not going to do it by mere mortifications and penances. In my desire to practice self-sacrifice I am in danger of confounding the mutilated life of the ascetic with the cross and discipline of Christ. I am right in thinking that the worldly life full of self-indulgence is a small and contemptible life, I am wrong in thinking that the Christian life consists merely in not doing things that other people do. The Christian life is not an empty garret but a palace beautiful by the side of which the life of the most sumptuous sybarite is a wretched hovel. Moreover, mortification of this sort breeds a judging temper and a spirit of pride. Self-sacrifice is self-realisation. I must approach my holy experiment from another side. I must seek not merely to lop off but to grow. I must acquire something I have not got. And here is a difficulty. In practical experience how am I to know what is meant by listening to the voice of Christ, obeying him and following him? How am I to identify the substance behind the current phrasing of the religious in my own inner consciousness? At first indeed there may be nothing to recognise, no intimation of Divine power, no distinct voice thrilling and commanding the soul, no presence before whom I instinctively kneel. No, perhaps not. But there is conscience, and conscience is a guide I can follow. For example! Be thoughtful of others, even in little things. Make a practice

of forgetting yourself. In the past it was always *I*, what do they say and think of *me*, am *I* getting the recognition that is my due? Now let it be otherwise. Am I helping him, what can I do for him, what am I thinking of him? Am I giving him his due? Without cessation, in the intimacies of the home life or on the broader stage of public service, the choice between recognised alternatives recurs. Generally I know perfectly well which is the right choice. Some one angers me, insults me. I want to hit back, sting with a sharp repartee, crush with a jibe. I practise restraint. I return soft answers. And so I might illustrate at large. In every activity of life I might select instances to mark the steps of my pilgrim's progress.

But I cannot rest satisfied here. I seek not only discipline but victory. I want to know not only conscience, but Christ. Yes, but to the sincere experimentalist, using his conscience as a guide, and seeking always to focus his life on that of Jesus Christ as he knows him in the Gospels and recognises him in his faithful disciples, there comes a time when the line between conscience and Christ grows very thin. There comes a time when the higher life of which I am always aware, and which I have tried to follow, becomes so merged in my thought of Christ and my devotion to him, that I can hardly distinguish the two in my mind. There comes a time when suddenly I am on my knees, my whole soul flooded with light and love, tears in my heart and eyes, an unspeakable peace enfolding me. The pierced hands have reached through to me at last and draw me

gently forth to him. "Come unto me and rest," and I answer, Yea, for I am hid with Christ in God.

I have sketched, you say, a hypothetical career. No, it is a story from real life. You say I have spoken in mystical language. I answer, Yes, the supreme moment cannot be defined in the dry language of theology, nor can words express it. You say [the experience is the result of mental suggestion practised over a term of years. I answer, No one believes that who has once been there and taken off his shoes on holy ground,—the reality is too overpowering, the effect too profound. But is this the experience of every one who tries the experiment? That question needs a careful answer. There are for example degrees in the sincerity and earnestness with which the experiment is pursued, and we must consider the great variety of temperament, no two individuals seeing life with the same eyes. I think the true answer is this, that the measure of God's response is the urgency and strength of our appeal, but it would be mischievous to assert that the character of the response always bears the same identity. I believe experience shows on the contrary that the character of the response is conditioned by individual needs, though in its substance it must always be the same—the consciousness, more or less clear, of union with God in thought and action, of an eternal purpose and worth in human life, and of an all embracing love. This union and sense of love, if experience be a guide, is strongest and deepest where the thought of God has been focused in the personality of Jesus Christ.

But perhaps I have made haste too fast. If I



go back to my pilgrim I find in his experience something upon which I have not touched. It is not a smooth progress that he makes. His sincerity wavers before the fierce resistance of hereditary evil, ingrained selfishness, natural sloth. There are times when he cannot keep his eyes upon the cross, when the goal upon which he set his heart grows dim, when the baser self yearns for the flesh pots of Egypt. How can he win through? There is only one way, the way of prayer. I do not mean formal praying, the rapid gabbling of the Lord's Prayer, or the set petition for outward benefits. I mean the prayer of the sinful man crying from the depths of his great need, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me"; the prayer of the longing soul seeking to escape from the clog of fleshly imperfection and to breathe the free, pure air of the spiritual life. Such prayer to be potent must be personal, it must throb with the conviction of human helplessness and of God's power to save, it must spring from a heart in which deep emotion has broken the reserve of pride. And while in its supreme expression such prayer may be only occasional, victory will be finally won only by the continuous cultivation of the prayerful spirit. In the spiritual athlete prayer becomes a habit of mind, not a spasmodic exercise. It becomes indeed the sign-manual of the soul's intimacy with God.

Amid the feverish activities of these modern days, when the loud-voiced interests of the world stun the ear, may we seek by devotional exercise in the private sanctuary of the home, no less than in public worship, to realise the saving love of God. And as we



turn our thoughts inward to face the solemn realities of eternal life, may the light of God's holiness reveal our sin as He sees it, that knowing our weakness we may seek His strength, and pray the Father whom Jesus has shown us, to take us as children by the hand, and lead us into His everlasting truth, by the way of service and a life of love freely given.



## SHADES OF THE PRISON HOUSE.

[This "self-revelation" speaks for itself. It needs no introduction. It appeared in *Present Day Papers* on the 15th April, 1902.]

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"And all the windows of my heart I open to the day." — *Whittier*.

LET us turn from the contemplation of the general and external to that which must govern all, the spiritual life of the individual man.

Not because we think politics are outside the sphere of religion, that is an old fallacy, nor in mere weariness and disgust recoiling from the sordid details of everyday affairs, that is an old temptation; but to make sure that the spring of our life's energy is true.

"These," said Thomas Paine, writing to the soldiers of Washington, "are times that try men's souls." The words are applicable in a peculiar degree both to nations and to individuals at the present day. The sense of vague movement in the political world, movement charged with destiny, is heavy upon us; the sense of transition in the world of religious ideas was never more acute; the mind of the modern is stretched upon the rack of uncertainty, and the old comfortable feeling of assured progress upon well understood lines has passed away. But though such thoughts may be with us, they must not engross us. We are concerned rather with the times which try the

souls of men in their private and intimate life, times which others do not share, trials of the spirit which come suddenly upon us in our solitude, and search the inmost recesses of the heart.

Who has not known these moments of self-revelation? laying bare to the shrinking sight our most secret motives with the ruthlessness of truth? There are times when self-deception falls away helpless, struck by a sudden paralysis in the midst of her strength, when through the torn web of facile delusions we see our selfishness ugly and naked, and upon deeds we thought meritorious the stain of self-love.

And perhaps after such an experience, we shall feel creeping over us the shades of the prison house.

It may be the bitterness of unrealised hope, or the recognised strength of unconquered passions, or the silent appeal of the passing years which point forward with warning to the mystery of death.

In that moment the golden apples of life turn to dust, a terrifying inconsequence besets all things; we feel our impotence and know the meaning of despair. And by such despair I do not mean the pleasurable melancholy which loves to brood over the past, the yearning, for instance, of the lover for the first days of love, or of the old man for childhood's buttercups and daisies. Such melancholy belongs rather to the luxuries of life, more often enervating than profitable, and it lies in any case beyond our scope. I am concerned not with sentimental regrets but with that pressure upon the heart as of an iron fate, the baffled beating of the imprisoned soul against bars of its own slow forging. That time of trial, when it

comes, crushes the worldling as we crush a butterfly in the hand, nor will strong men always win through it.

And yet it is a time to be looked for, even as a mother looks, though she dreads it, for the birth of her child. For it is then that the real and eternal self seeks both utterance and victory, then that the Scripture, "Ye must be born again," may find its glorious fulfilment. It is well indeed that we creatures, prone to the fascination of ephemeral joys, occupied with affairs, living the superficial life that is sufficient only so long as it flows unchecked through easy channels, should be brought up, even if it be with a rude shock, by the eternal truth of the Unseen. It is well that we cannot always live upon shams, but that deep in the heart there is a craving, never wholly subdued, for the real and true, for the final expression of our highest self.

Ignore this stirring of the Divine life, chill with your persistent indifference its glowing warmth, but as the years pass the shadows of the prison house will deepen, and you shall at the last behold life's sunset through prison bars.

Oh, doom beyond the saddest guess,  
As the long years of God unroll,  
To make your dreary selfishness  
The prison of a soul.

Whereon, in such hour of stress, shall the soul be stayed ?

By what might may the bars be broken and the soul set free ?

The ties of the flesh are strong, and the will is weak. We see the true life, it shines before us a holy



picture, with the radiance of God, but our steps are stayed. We see our sin, we loathe its horrid shape, we know it ignoble and mean, but we do not flee. It seemed fair once, when the holy life seemed distant and cold. Could this moment pass, this moment of true values and eternal vistas, it would seem fair again. Yea, even as we shudder and tremble this thought whispers evil in our ear :

“Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die.”

Is this issue final? Let us sin a little more! Is that picture—that of the radiance of God—is it true? Is there certainty of peace if I struggle, even if with pain and bleeding I win free? And life was so pleasant until this moment of shattered self-esteem; its shams were realities; it had no memory and no foreboding. None? What of those shadows slowly deepening, that touch of occasional chill in the summer air? Yet the baubles glitter and the vision fades and I fail.

Or I strive and yet fail, fail unwillingly and with pain at the heart. I see the true life and reach after it, and step forward to it and stumble, even as I grasp. And I was alone with none to help me. I cried unto God and He did not answer me. I sought His hand to take it, but He stretched it not out, and I went back from His house where there was no welcome, to the swine husks and the feeding trough.

But was there no welcome and no outstretched hand? Was there not rather a strain of doubt in my striving, and impurity at its source? It is the pure in heart that see God.

At such times we learn the limits of helpfulness in systems of ethics, theological propositions, and philosophical treatises. They are fine rafts in fair weather, but alas! as Emerson has said, "we know better than we do!" When the storm breaks and the seas rise round about us, we discover that we have nothing to hold to and are swept helpless away. They know little indeed of "the terror of the Lord," who find an all-saving belief in the admiration of an ideal.

Admire Christ they say, and you will grow like him, admire him as the ideal of the race, and it matters not whether or no he be the Son of God. The quality of admiration, when rightly directed, is excellent, but what barren advice for the storm-tossed soul. I do not lack the capacity to admire, I lack the will to imitate and to obey. There is the heart of the question, and when the will is weak whither must I turn? Admiration will not help me except to deepen my despair. Example and precept, these can but faintly stir my soul, nay they stand as it were outside and mock me in my distress. To those who would advise me I exclaim with Faust, "I know the message well, but I lack the faith."

Christ, the historical Christ, is so far away, and if it be true that in him is the power to save, that he is "nearer than hands and feet," yet I have not seen him nor felt his presence near. My office or school work, my interests in politics, literature, art, society, the minutiae of the home life, its intimate intercourse its lights and shadows, these are real enough. But the Christ is so far away. He moved among a people

and spoke a language that are not our own. In his oriental dress with his Galilean following his entrance into our modern life with its railways and newspapers, its hotels and clubs, would be strangely incongruous. Perhaps in a vague way at times of favoured insight or of rare emotion, it may have seemed as if I felt the touch of a heavenly hand and saw the glimmer of a Divine radiance, and then it has gone and once more the trivialities of everyday life have swept in upon me with their deadening weight,—the shades of the prison house !

But what says Browning—who in his “Death in the Desert ” has set this difficulty forth ?

“ I say the acknowledgment of God in Christ,  
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee  
All questions in the earth and out of it,  
And has so far advanced thee to be wise.”

It is true that there are difficulties, real and pressing, in the acceptance of the historical Christ, difficulties of Scripture interpretation, the text, authorship, the possibility of error and myth, the inevitable difficulties of distance and of time, but do not forget that there is a living bridge which links us to the past.

The present witness of Christ's power in the heart truly yielded to the dominance of his love, has a convincing power denied to all the doctrines of the schools. And step by step, generation by generation, we may trace back our way through a succession of holy lives to their Divine source, in Jesus of Nazareth. It is the fact not the theory that must convince. Philosophy, criticism, analysis, none can avail against the living testimony of one holy soul. *Men have known in their*

*hearts that God is not a silent God.* They have thrust their hands with doubting Thomas into the Divine wounds and found them real. They have been turned from helpless sinning to triumphant victory, by the redeeming passion of the Cross.

And this experience is not the fruit simply of some intellectual process. The recognition of the ethical beauty of Christ's teaching is much, but it is not all. Those who rest satisfied with this, or who imagine that the recognition of the ideal is in itself salvation, must know a deeper baptism before they can pass behind the veil. The living personal knowledge of God as revealed in Christ, convicting us of selfishness, searching out our sin, destroying in its pure flame the dross of our lower nature, is an experience which forever banishes doubt and demands no explanation. It is enough ! The heart has felt ! It is enough to *feel* that the power of sin is broken and that the will lies plastic to the Master's hand. And to that experience, be it fierce and sudden, or slowly born of lingering pain, there is but one royal road. It is not through Biblical criticism, nor through philosophical speculation, though these have their place.

No ! the road lies through a garden—the garden of Gethsemane. By prayer, the prayer of our whole nature, voicing our abasement and our hope, our weakness and the strength of our striving, our unfitness and our longing, prayer that rises from the very deeps of our being, such prayer alone can pierce the darkness that walls us round, and yield us the joy of the Divine illumination—"the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."





## IN MEMORIAM.

[This, the last essay that John Wilhelm Rowntree published, was written for *Bootham*, the journal of the Friends' Schools at York. It appeared on February 7th, 1905.]

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NINETEEN Hundred and Four has taken a heavy toll from the larger "Bootham" which counts past as well as present scholars of its fellowship. Under circumstances of peculiar pathos, several "Old Boys," all young in years, have obeyed the silent summons. Their life-work just begun has been abruptly cut short, and we still feel the pang of parting, feel perhaps as an intolerable burden the weight of that dark mystery of life which grows no less with the gathering years.

In the gloomy waters of Lough Neagh, seven young people fought death for each other, plunged suddenly from the innocent pleasures of a picnic into a strife which opened on Eternity. For the readers of this journal the memory of that catastrophe centres naturally round the names of two Old Bootham Boys, Hugh William Pettifer Catchpool and Herbert James Green. When they died in a vain attempt to save the others, they were but nineteen years of age. In their unselfish heroism, face to face with death, they honoured the school from which they came, and enriched her records with the emblazonment of a fine example.

But not only to them do we render the parting salute. Under differing circumstances, less dramatic though hardly less poignant, there are other names to inscribe on the roll. Herbert Andrews, an only son, about to be married, and about twenty-four years old, passed with an unfaltering courage, from the light of a young life with all its hope and interest, to the unknown land; James Edward Rowntree, always cheerful, never complaining, suffering long months of terrible pain, was released at length from his prison of tortured flesh, leaving a little daughter and a widow; and Henry Ernest Grace, at thirty-four, buoyant, cheery, ever sympathetic and unselfish, was taken after a few brief days of agony, in the full tide of strenuous labour for God and man, leaving a widow, but no child.

Faith falters in such a recital. The strokes of fate seem so pitiless, so cruel and unmeaning. Can it be that man is "cast as rubbish to the void"? One is tempted at times to take hard views of God, and fall back upon a self-contained stoicism as the only way of life: to say, "Come what may, I do my duty," and leave it there. But that is only the first counsel. Wisdom comes with patience. I have before me a reproduction of an old German print. It is a copper engraving by an artist who, flourishing at the beginning of the sixteenth century, saw death ride across Europe in the appalling disguise of the Plague—saw it in an age when science was superstition and medicine quackery, and the powers of evil were personified, to the terrified imagination of an ignorant people, as devils bearing all the sombre marks of their subter-

ranee degradation. The artist, Beham, was an agnostic, in full revolt against the social order, and his engraving, terrible in the fierce significance of its symbolism, expresses his cynical estimate of life. The print presents us with Adam and Eve standing on each side of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The stem of the tree is a skeleton with a grinning skull, one arm becomes a branch from which Eve gathers the apple, and the serpent, coiled round the neck of the skeleton, bites the apple with poisonous fangs as Eve plucks it. That was a sad conclusion to come to in the morning light of the Renaissance ! We cannot, we dare not, be content with it. To let death poison life and draw between us and the sunshine its cloud of morbid horror, is to commit a moral suicide and reduce cosmos to chaos. We might brave it out for a time, but sooner or later the wheels of progress would run down, for the spring would be broken. We may reverence Marcus Aurelius, that granite peak in a range of ignoble hills, but to insist that his brave spirit can teach us an all-sufficient philosophy is to deny the most obvious facts of experience. Nay ! the very lives taken from us call us to a sunnier view of faith, a stronger belief in the dignity and purpose of being. Courage, unselfishness, and above all love, that root of faith and unity of all the virtues, found in them their witness. Every man knows in his heart that there is no greater thing in the world than pure, unselfish love. Death cannot conquer, nay, he teaches ever that love is supreme. Good men do not die. Their lives are as the tearing of the veil, they show us something of that which is eternal, for if here love is

greatest in the heart of man, must it not be greatest in God Himself? And if greatest in Himself, then let the mystery of His will be never so dark, we may gird ourselves each to his life's work with something more than courage. Love bridges death. We are comrades of those who are gone; though death separate us, their work, their fortitude, their love, shall be ours, and we will adventure with hope, and in the spirit and strength of our great Comrade of Galilee, who was acquainted with grief and knew the shadows of Gethsemane, to fight the good fight of faith.

“Glory of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,  
Paid with a voice flying by to be lost in an endless sea.”

No! give me

“The wages of going on and not to die.”

## APPENDIX I.

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### FOUNDERS OF QUAKERISM IN YORKSHIRE.

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**GEORGE FOX.** Born at Drayton-in-the-Clay, Leicestershire, 1624. Visited Yorkshire, 1651, 1652 (twice in this year), 1654, 1656, 1657 (twice in this year), 1663, 1665-6, 1669, 1677, 1678, 1679-80. Died in London 13th of 11th Mo. 1690 (Old Style). 1st Mo. 1691 (New Style).

**Thomas Aldam,** of Warmsworth, Yorkshire. Convinced there by George Fox in 1651. One of the first Quakers imprisoned in York Castle. Kept there two years and a half. Died 1660. Buried at Warmsworth.

**John Blaykling,** of Drawell, near Sedburgh, Yorkshire. Born 1625. Convinced by George Fox in 1652. Many times imprisoned in York and Tynemouth Castles and elsewhere. At his house the meeting was held with Story and Wilkinson, which began April 3rd, 1676, and lasted four days. Died 1705.

**Gervase Benson.** Once a Colonel in the Army. Appears to have lived at Kendal. Convinced by George Fox in 1652. He and John Blaykling preached in Coverdale; and soon after a meeting was settled there. Died 1679.

**John Camm.** Born 1605 at Camm's Gill, near Kendal. Convinced at the great meeting at Firbank Chapel, 1652; by George Fox. Laboured around Bentham and Settle in Yorkshire. Died 1657.

**Stephen Crisp.** Born in Colchester, 1628. Convinced by James Parnell in 1655. Travelled in Yorkshire in 1660. Ill-used at York by Leonard Thompson; then Lord Mayor. Re-visited Yorkshire in 1671 and 1678. Malton, 1678. Died 1692.



- William Dewsbury.** Born at Allerthorpe; near Pocklington; Yorkshire. Convinced by George Fox at Balby; Yorkshire; in 1651. Became the principal leader of Yorkshire Quakerism. Spent about nineteen years in prison, nine of which were in Warwick Castle. Died at Warwick, 1688.
- Richard Farnsworth.** Convinced at Balby by G. Fox; 1651. Became an eminent minister. Present at the great three days' meeting at Malton in 1653. Imprisoned at Banbury for twelve months in 1655. Died in London; 1666.
- Thomas Goodyear.** Convinced by George Fox at or near Wakefield in 1651. Suffered much persecution and imprisonment. Died at Selby; 1693.
- Richard Hubberthorne,** of Yealand; Lancashire. Convinced by G. Fox; 1652. Laboured in Wensleydale. Died in Newgate, 1662.
- Roger Hebden,** of Malton. Born about 1620. Convinced by George Fox; 1651. Became a well-known local minister. Helped to gather and settle several meetings. Had a draper's shop in Malton; which he gave up for the sake of the ministry. Imprisoned at York. Died 1695.
- James Nayler.** Born in the parish of Ardsley; near Wakefield; about 1616. Convinced by George Fox; 1651. Laboured actively in and around Wakefield; and helped to found Scalehouse Meeting. Fell into spiritual pride and blasphemy about 1656. Tried by Parliament and severely punished. Died at Holm; and was buried at King's Ripton; Huntingdon; 1660.
- Richard Robinson,** of Countersett in Wensleydale. Born at Preston in this dale; 1628. Convinced 1652 by G. Fox. Preached often at Askrigg; Richmond; Middleham; Bedale; Thirsk; Northallerton; Barnard Castle; and other places in Yorkshire. Imprisoned in York Castle; where he had to lay in a great oven in the Castle Yard wall; the Jail being so full of Friends who were prisoners. Prisoner in Richmond Jail, 1678 and 1684. Died at Countersett; 1693. Buried at Bambridge.

**Thomas Taylor,** of Skipton; Yorkshire. Born 1616. Educated at Oxford. Had a benefice at Richmond; Yorkshire. Convinced by George Fox; 1652 (at Swarthmore). Laboured at Bradford; Knaresborough; in Netherdale and Brighouse district. Imprisoned for nearly two years in Appleby Jail; 1657; in York and Lancaster Castles; 1660; in Derby Jail; 1661; Stafford for nearly ten years. Died 1681.

**Christopher Taylor.** Brother of Thomas Taylor. Supposed to have been born near Skipton. Convinced 1652. Laboured like his brother in Yorkshire. Imprisoned 1654 and 1661. Later, kept a Boarding-school for Friends' Children in Waltham Abbey; Essex; and afterwards at Edmonton. Emigrated to Pennsylvania about 1682; and there died; 1686.

**Thomas Thompson,** of Skipsea. Born 1631. Convinced by Wm. Dewsbury; and began his ministry in 1652. Accompanied Wm. Dewsbury, John Whitehead; James Nayler; and other early ministers in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Suffered ten and a half years imprisonment. Died 1704.

**John Whitehead.** Probably born in Yorkshire about 1630. Convinced (while a soldier at Scarborough Castle) by William Dewsbury in 1652. One of the most prominent of the early Quaker preachers in North-east Yorks. Often imprisoned on Truth's account. Died 1690; and was buried at Lincoln.

**Robert Wedders.** Born about 1618 at Upper Kellet; Lancashire. Convinced by G. Fox; 1652. Laboured in Swaledale. Imprisoned; 1653, in Carlisle Jail. Died at Kellet; 1686.

## APPENDIX II.

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### RISE OF QUAKERISM IN YORKSHIRE.

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#### CHRONOLOGICAL MEMORANDA.

[Largely selected from J. Stephenson Rowntree's *Chronological Notes*.]

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RISE OF PURITANISM	1559
<i>Robert Brown, the first "Independent."</i>	1550(?)—1633(?)
<i>Jacob Böhme</i>	1576—1624
<i>George Herbert</i>	1593—1632
<i>John Milton</i>	1608—1675
ENGLISH BIBLE; AUTHORISED VERSION	1611
<i>Pilgrim Fathers</i>	1620
<i>Blaise Pascal</i>	1623—1662
GEORGE FOX BORN	1624
<i>Michael Molinos</i>	1627—1696
<i>John Bunyan</i>	1628—1688
<i>John Locke</i>	1632—1704
<i>Madame Guyon</i>	1642—1717
George Fox began his Ministry	1647
Quakers. A name coined by Justice Bennett of Derby	1650
George Fox's first visit to Yorkshire (including Whitby, Scarborough and Malton)	1651—2

<b>Friends' Meetings settled in Yorkshire (principally by the preaching of George Fox, William Dewsbury, James Nayler, Christopher and Thomas Taylor, Thomas Aldham, and Richard Farnsworth)</b>	1651-54
Settlement of earliest Meetings for Discipline of Friends	1653
<b>Great Meeting at Malton, lasting three or four days, attended by 200 persons</b>	1653
James Milner and Richard Myer "went out into imaginations"	1653
<b>MORE THAN SIXTY MINISTERS DECLARING "THE TRUTH"</b>	1654
George Fox's Imprisonment at Launceston	1655
One thousand Friends imprisoned in Great Britain ; Mary Fisher (a Yorkshire woman) and Ann Austin visit America. <b>FALL OF JAMES NAYLER</b>	1656
<b>General Meeting at Scalehouse, Skipton ; Collections to promote visits of Friends beyond the seas ; DEATH OF CROMWELL ; Yearly Meeting at John Crook's, Luton</b>	1658
Martyrdom of Mary Dyer, Marmaduke Stevenson (from Yorkshire), William Leddra; and William Robinson at Boston. <i>Restoration of Charles II.</i>	1659-1660
John Perrot and Charles Baily "turned aside from the Friends and Truth" (G.F.)	1661
4,200 Friends prisoners	1662
<b>ACT OF UNIFORMITY. St. Bartholomew's Day. Ejectment of 2,000 Nonconformist Ministers</b>	1662
George Fox imprisoned in Lancaster and Scarborough Castles	1663-66
<b>CONVENTICLE ACT PASSED</b>	1664
<b>Five Monthly Meetings in Yorkshire</b>	1665
<b>FIVE MILE ACT PASSED</b>	1665
Friends' Marriage procedure revised. Waltham and Shacklewell Schools. <i>Milton's "Paradise Lost"</i>	1667

- Robert Barclay and William Penn join the Friends 1667-1668
- "CANONS AND INSTITUTIONS" OF GEORGE FOX ISSUED (Published in adverse pamphlet; 1669). Recommended that disorderly walkers be exhorted and report made; Provision made for children of first marriages; Children to be trained up in the fear of the Lord; and books to be provided for registering Births; Marriages, and Burials 1668
- William Penn's "No Cross; No Crown." Marriage of George Fox and Margaret Fell. **Earliest Minute-book of Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting.** Testimonies drawn up against Joshua Green and William Farthing. **Fourteen Monthly Meetings in Yorkshire** 1669
- Minute Book of Scarborough and Whitby Monthly Meeting commences. First M.M. held at Stainton-dale 1669
- Further regulations on Marriage procedure promulgated; CONVENTICLE ACT RENEWED. GREAT PERSECUTIONS OF FRIENDS 1670
- Trial of William Penn and William Mead 1670
- George Fox recommends that the condemnation of such as went out from truth into disorderly practices; and the repentance and restoration of such as returned again, be recorded in a book for that purpose. G.F. visits West Indies 1671
- First Yearly Meeting in London 1672
- Liberation of many Friends from prison; also John Bunyan; George Fox visits Maryland 1672
- Great opposition to settlement of Women's Meeting for Discipline. William Penn's "Alexander the Coppersmith" 1673
- Meeting-house built in New York. New Jersey a Quaker Colony 1674
- Robert Barclay's "Apology." Wilkinson-Story separation. Opposition to Women's Meetings and the Friends' discipline generally 1675



- Meeting-house in Scarborough built** 1676
- Robert Barclay's "Anarchy of the Ranters" 1676
- Earliest existing Minutes of Yorkshire Women's Quarterly Meeting** 1676-1677
- First Testimony of Disownment in Scarborough and Whitby Monthly Meeting Minute-books** 1677
- George Fox visits Holland. **One hundred and forty-nine names of meetings of Quakers in North and East Ridings of Yorkshire officially recorded** 1677-1716
- Spirit of separation rife. Wilkinson; Story; and Rogers 1677
- "*Pilgrim's Progress*" published 1678
- Publication of "Christian Quaker," etc. W. Rogers 1680
- William Penn's "State of Liberty Spiritual" 1681
- William Penn founds Philadelphia. Thomas Ellwood's antidote to William Rogers. Great persecution 1682
- William Rogers' "Scourge" and "Second Scourge for John Whitehead." (A Poem!) 1683-1684
- George Fox visits Holland 1684
- Death of Charles II. More than 5,100 Friends imprisoned during his reign. 1,383 Friends in Jail on accession of James II. Release of many Friend prisoners. Thomas Hammond, Clerk of Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting (holds office forty-five years)** 1685
- Revocation of Edict of Nantes.* Thomas Ellwood's "Roger Mastix" 1685
- TOLERATION ACT PASSED ; more than 100 Friends' Meetings licensed in West Riding soon after this. Most of them private dwelling-houses** 1689
- DEATH OF GEORGE FOX, 13th January, (i. e. 11 Mo. 1690 O.S.)** 1691
- By advice of the Quarterly Meeting, four Friends of Scarborough and Whitby Meeting appointed "to take the Oversight of Friends at this Meeting"** 1691

<b>Malton Monthly Meeting Minute Book Commences</b> (with entries from earlier book)	1694
<b>FRIENDS AFFIRMATION ACT PASSED</b>	1696
<b>York Quarterly Meeting orders two Friends to be appointed to enquire into the clearness of those intending marriage, and two honest Friends to see that the proceedings at weddings are orderly</b>	1697
<b>First Recorded Appointment of Overseers (Men and Women) by Malton Monthly Meeting</b>	1699
<b>Friends known to be resident in 464 Towns and Villages in Yorkshire about this time</b>	
Narratives of the early "Breaking forth of Truth," collected by the Morning Meeting. Yorkshire Quarterly meeting of Ministers meets at 6 a.m.	1705
First recorded Disownment in <b>Malton Monthly Meeting Minute Book</b>	1707
<b>Kelk Monthly Meeting becomes Bridlington</b>	1712
<b>York large Meeting-house built</b>	1718
Simplification of Friends' form of Affirmation legalised	1722
Series of Queries issued by Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting	1727
Membership with Friends defined by Minute of Yearly Meeting	1737
MSS. books of Extracts prepared in London (charged £2 10s. each)	1738
<b>RISE OF METHODISM</b>	1739
<b>Elloughton Mo. Meeting becomes Cave M.M.</b>	1743
Elders and Overseers appointed in many meetings	1750
<i>Calendar amended. New Year's Day; January 1st, instead of March 25th. January becomes the "first month" with corresponding changes throughout</i>	1752
<b>Seventy Particular Meetings in Yorkshire</b>	1758

VISIT OF YEARLY MEETING'S COMMITTEE TO YORKSHIRE; REVIVAL OF DISCIPLINE, JOHN GRIFFITH	1761
John Woolman dies at York; growing interest in anti- Slavery movement	1772
<b>Bridlington</b> Monthly Meeting "laid down," the con- gregations being divided between <b>Owstwick</b> and <b>Cave</b>	1773
<b>First Quarterly Meeting held at Leeds; War of American Independence. Junction of Owstwick and Cave M.M.'s</b>	1775
Visit of Yearly Meeting's Committee to Yorkshire; they make a printed report	1777
£1,150 collected in Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting for Philadelphia Friends in distress	1778
<b>Establishment of Ackworth School; Dr. John Fothergill</b>	1779
First printed Book of Extracts published	1783
Establishment of the Women's Yearly Meeting	1784
Lindley and H. Murray settle at York	1785
<b>Proprietary Girls' School opened at York; William and Esther Tuke</b>	1784-1813
<b>Junction of Scarborough and Malton Mo. Meetings under the name of Pickering Mo. Meeting</b>	1789
<i>French Revolution</i>	1792
Monthly Meetings in Yorkshire enter into a union for the Relief of the Poor	1795
Opening of York Retreat	1796
<i>Religious Tract Society founded</i>	1799
Book of Discipline, second edition	1802
Four Particular Meetings discontinued. <b>Owstwick and Cave</b> to be called <b>Hull</b> Monthly Meeting	1803

<b>Salterforth and Bridlington Meetings reopened ;</b> a Statistical Memorandum states that in the ten years (1801-1810) the births registered in Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting were—Members; 735; Non-Members; 417; burials; Members; 725; Non-Members; 282; marriages; 152; admissions from convincement; 67	1810
<b>Dewsbury Meeting Established</b>	1812
<b>York large Meeting-house (re-building, £2,963); Richmond Monthly Meeting joined to Westmorland Quarterly Meeting</b>	1816
<b>Death of Henry Tuke; building of Barnsley Meeting-house.</b> Strong Minute <i>re</i> "Fictitious Paper Credit"; books received from Morris Birkbeck	1817
<b>Knaresborough Meeting re-opened; Shipton Meeting closed; "Transcribing Clerk" proposed</b>	1818
<b>Boys' School begun in Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting premises in Lawrence Street, York, by William Simpson</b>	1823
<b>Dissolution of Thirsk Monthly Meeting</b>	1827
<b>Rawdon School opened; Friends' Provident Institution Established</b>	1832
<b>Kirby Moorside and Helmsley transferred from Gulsborough Monthly Meeting to Pickering Monthly Meeting</b>	1833
<b>Surrender of Friends' Registers to Government:</b> Entries of Births; 260,000; marriages; 40,000; burials; 310,000	1840
<b>Ayton School Established</b>	1841
<b>Helmsley Meeting closed</b>	1842
<b>Bridlington Meeting closed</b>	1844
<b>Gulsborough Monthly Meeting joined to Durham Quarterly Meeting</b>	1850
<b>Dissolution of Settle and Knaresborough Monthly Meetings</b>	1853

# CHRONOLOGICAL MEMORANDA.

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*Abolition of Religious Tests in Scottish Universities*

1853

**Pickering and Hull Monthly Meeting united**

1858

Particular Meetings, 40 ; Members, 2,198 ; Attenders,  
1,099

1872

Particular Meetings, 39 ; Members, 2,399 ; Attenders,  
1,333. Friends' Home Mission Committee estab-  
lished

1882

Particular Meetings, 37 ; Members, 2,581 ; Attenders,  
1,377

1892

Particular Meetings, 37 ; Members, 2,632 ; Attenders,  
1,509

1899



### APPENDIX III.

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## THE SPIRIT OF 17TH CENTURY QUAKERISM.

AN EXTRACT FROM JAMES NAYLER.

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*NOTE.—James Nayler was born in the parish of Ardsley, near Wakefield; about 1616. Convinced, 1651. About 1656 fell into spiritual pride and blasphemy, probably through mental overstrain and aberration; was tried by Parliament in the same year. His case was discussed in the House of Commons for twelve days. Sentenced to a cruel and vindictive punishment in London and Bristol; which, in spite of a petition to Oliver Cromwell, was carried out to the letter. From the after-effects of this he died at Holm; near King's Ripton; Huntingdon; where he was buried; in 1660.*

*J.N. repented in deep sorrow and humility, and uttered; two hours before his death; a beautiful testimony; from which the following extract is given:—*

“THERE is a spirit which I feel; that ‘delights to do no evil; nor to revenge any wrong; but delights to endure all things; in hopes to enjoy its own to the end: Its hope is to outlive all wrath and contention; and to weary out all exaltation and cruelty; or whatever is of a nature contrary to itself. It sees to the end of all temptation: As it bears no evil in itself; so it conceives none in thought to any other: If it be betrayed it bears it; for its ground and spring is the mercies and forgiveness of God: Its crown is meekness, its life is everlasting love unfeigned; and takes its kingdom with entreaty and not with contention; and keeps it by lowliness of mind. . . . I found it alone being forsaken: I have fellowship therein with them who live in dens and desolate places in the earth; who through death obtained this resurrection and eternal holy life.”

## APPENDIX V.

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### THE DEATH OF JOHN WILHELM ROWNTREE.

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[This article is taken from the *American Friend* of 16th March, 1905. Dr. Rufus Jones, the Editor, was with John Wilhelm Rowntree at the time of his death].

AFTER a long, brave fight with pneumonia, contracted on the steamer, our beloved friend, John Wilhelm Rowntree, peacefully passed into the invisible life, in New York City, Third month, 9th. It seems well-nigh impossible to break the awe and hush which cover one who has stood by his bedside in these last moments, and to tell in calm words what his life has been and what his death means. To those of us who belong to the younger generation of Friends he was our foremost leader. He possessed in very high degree the qualities of mind and heart which fitted him for leadership, and he had the genius and spirit of a Christian statesman, farseeing in plan and policy, fertile in constructive ideas and unwearied in execution. His death has removed the person whose life at this juncture seemed the most important and indispensable for the expansion and reinterpretation of Quakerism. He brought to this task rare and precious gifts. Upon few Friends who have ever lived has such a powerful gift in the ministry been conferred. At its highest his ministry had a reach and power and a winning appeal which have appeared in few men of our day. The command of perfect expression, the power of description, the immense grasp of truth, the penetration of soul,

the fire of conviction, the tenderness of spirit and the glow of consecration united in one man made his ministry extraordinary. No living Friend has done so much as he to make the atonement real and compelling. He has preached his greatest sermons on the theme of the Cross. He had spent the last weeks of his life interpreting it in written articles, but he has told the message best in quiet personal talks, when he made one feel that the atonement had become an *experience* to him as it had to the apostle Paul. Just this deep possession of the truth in a personal experience was the most striking feature of his life. His words weighed heavy because they were always loaded with his large, rich life, and had been forged in the heat and glow of his own experience.

He had a love and passion for his own society, like that of a Hebrew prophet for his race and nation. All his strength and genius and gifts were devoted to it. With patient care he studied every movement in its past history, so that he might bring to his present day tasks a wisdom and insight which would make the advances of this generation *real* advances. He was at work, when his summons came, upon a complete history of Quakerism, with special stress upon the great changes which had characterised it, and had broken it up into "branches" during the nineteenth century.

It was most pitiful to hear him dwell, in the delirium of fever, upon the great literary plan of his life. He had spent years preparing for it. He had ransacked two continents for his mass of facts, and with an earnestness which pierced one's soul he pleaded for the privilege of completing this undertaking. Who will take up the pen which his fingers can no longer hold ?

No other person beyond the sea so thoroughly understood all the aspects and phases of American Quakerism. He had visited and studied sympathetically every kind of meeting, and he knew, as few others know, the problems which confront us or the difficulties to be overcome before we can repair the blunders of the past and realise the mission to which we are called. He earnestly longed to see the gaps

and chasms of separation closed, and the whole body of Friends once more united in work and in message, a living power in the spiritual conflicts of our age. He had hoped to spend some years of service among us, when a way opened for it, that he might labour with us toward the realisation of that larger future which his vision forecast.

His greatest visible service has been in the organisation of settlements for religious study. Eight years ago he began to plan an adequate institution for the religious training of English Friends. At first his plans were too ambitious to be realised. But, like a wise man, he soon decided to begin with what he could get. With other splendid helpers he organised the Scarborough settlement, which proved a time of profound blessing. It was followed by another at Windermere, and finally the way opened for a permanent settlement at Woodbrooke, where he lived to see the deep purpose of his life well on the way toward realisation. He was coming to America with his mind all full of plans for a great settlement next summer, and he was expecting to draw together a band of lecturers who would make it one of the most important religious events of the summer in Great Britain. He had himself sat in the darkness of agnosticism, and had been delivered from it, and he longed with a holy longing to help as many as he could out of ignorance and out of partial knowledge into the breadth and freedom of truth. There are many who now *see* because of his labours.

But the greatest thing about our dear friend was his life. His gifts were large, his culture was rich and broad, he did an astonishing amount of work for a man who finished his course at thirty-six, but those of us who were nearest him knew that best of all God had given to us in him a precious friend, a life luminous with character and with goodness. Just as he was entering young manhood and was beginning to feel the dawning sense of a great mission before him, he discovered that he was slowly losing his sight and hearing. He was told that before middle life he would become totally blind. Dazed and overwhelmed he staggered



from the doctor's office to the street and stood there in silence. Suddenly he felt the love of God wrap him about as though a visible presence enfolded him, and a joy filled him, such as he had never known before. From that time until this joy was deepened in the new life of to-day, he was a gloriously joyous and happy man. His physical limitations have all along been turned into inward profit. His long, hard battle with a stubborn disease which was attacking the very citadel of his powers—his sight, his hearing, and his memory,—has only made him more heroic and gentle. No complaint, no bitterness was ever heard. If he could not have full light, he was duly thankful for one-third vision, and year after year he came to America in the hope of preserving the narrow sight which was left to him. He worked when he could, and when the doctor laid an embargo on him he waited his time to gather up his work again and go on.

Few things show the true, deep nature of a man more than his humour. The finest humour always comes from the finest spirit. The play of his spirit was one of the loveliest things about him. He thoroughly enjoyed life, and when he was with congenial persons his happy spirit flowed out in sheer joy. He was intensely human. He was as far removed from the ascetic as a man could be. He believed that religion meant the abundant life, the full life, not a cramped and contracted one, and in the completest way he practised this faith. The result was that he got into close touch with all kinds of persons and had a way of entering almost any life. He could pass naturally and with perfect ease from the strain of work or from solemn meditation of spirit to complete relaxation in happy innocent play, as though one were as truly a part of life as the other.

When he prayed, you discovered best how real and genuine his life was. He talked with God in perfect sincerity and simplicity. It was a needy, finite spirit opening itself to a loving Father who needed no phrases or flattery, but who would hear every word spoken in spirit and in









— A MAP —

OF THE

MONTHLY AND PARTICULAR

— MEETINGS —

AND THE TOWNS ATTACHED TO EACH MEETING

— BELONGING TO THE —

QUARTERLY MEETING

OF

— YORK —

IN THE YEAR

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truth. His prayers in times of sorrow and affliction were revelations of the depth of his love and sympathy. Out of his own last illness there rose a prayer of confidence and trust, a cry for a personal immortality and further life of love which left an undying impression on everyone who heard it.

His love of man, or, better his love of men, was shown by his interest in all the problems of labour and poverty, and by his years of effort in the village of Acomb, where he had a large class of men, and he frequently addressed large meetings in the town of Scarborough, near where he lived in these closing years. One of the last plans of his life was the construction of a "rest home" for working men and working women—"a valley of peace" (Friedensthal) as he named it—where the tired worker might have a thorough refreshment of mind and body. And now after the storm and stress of fever and pain he has broken away from the worn body and has found his "valley of peace" in the circle of those who have fought the good fight and have kept the faith. He has seen much fruit from his brief life, he has had the joy of rich love and noble friendship, and he has lived these last years with the light of God on his face. His going has cast a shadow on many of our lives, it has made all our tasks harder, and it has left us much poorer, but his banner shall not fall, and what he lived to do shall with Christ's help be carried on by the band of faithful friends who have felt the inspiration of his life, and who have had visions of the goal toward which he was pressing.



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